



# ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

## NINETEENTH SESSION



AKOLA (Berar)

DECEMBER 28 TO 31, 1946.

PRICE EXCLUDING POSTAGE

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**P A T R O N S**  
**OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE**

Lady Dorothy Halifax

Her Highness Maharani Chinnabai Gaekwar of Baroda

Lady Rama Varma of Cochin

Her Highness Maharani Sucharu Devi of Mayurbhanj

Rani Saheba Lalita Kumari Devi of Vizianagaram

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

Dr. Mrs Muthulakshmi Reddi

Lady Vidyagauri R. Nilkanth

Lady Abdul Qadir

Mrs Rustemji Faridoonji

Her Highness Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi of Travancore

Mrs M E. Cousins

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade

Begum Shareefah Hamid Ali

Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru

Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

Shrimati Kamaladevi

Mrs S. C. Mukerjee

Mrs Hansa Mehta

Mrs Sharadaben Mehta

## NAMES OF PAST PRESIDENTS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Venus of Conference Session</i>		<i>President</i>
1927	(Jan.)	Poona	Maharani Chinnabai Sahab Gaskwar
1928	(Jan.)	Delhi	The Begum Mother of Bhopal
1929	(Jan)	Patna	The Dowager Rani of Mandi
1930	(Jan.)	Bombay	Sarojini Naidu
1931	(Jan)	Lahore	Muthulakshmi Reddi
1932	(Jan.)	Madras	Sarala Ray
1933	(Jan)	Lucknow	Vidyagauri R. Nilkanth
1933	(Dec)	Calcutta	Lady Abdul Qadir
1934	(Dec)	Karachi	Rustomji Faridoonji
1935	(Dec.)	Trivandrum	Maharani Setu Parvathi Bayi
1936	(Dec)	Ahmedabad	Margaret E. Cousins
1937	(Dec)	Nagpur	Rajkumari Amrit Kaur
1938	(Dec)	Delhi	Lakshmi Bai Rajwade
1940	(Jan)	Allahabad	Shariefah Hamid Ali
1940	(Dec.)	Bangalore	Rameshwari Nehru
1941	(Dec)	Coconada	Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
1944	(April)	Bombay	Kamaladevi
1945	(Dec)	Hyderabad (Sind)	Hansa Mehta

# NAMES OF CHAIRWOMEN AND GENERAL SECRETARIES

## From 1926-1946.

<i>Chair woman</i>	<i>Hon. General Secretary</i>
	M. E Cousins
M E Cousins	Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya
Shareefah Hamid Ali	" "
Mrs Hudekoper	" "
Sushama Sen	Kamaladevi, Sushama Sen and Lakshmi Bai Rajwade
Amrit Kaur	Lakshmi Bai Rajwade
" "	" "
Muthulakshmi Reddi	" "
Lakshmi Bai Rajwade	Charulata Mukerjee
" "	" "
Charulata Mukerjee	Annu Swaminadhan
Annu Swaminadhan	Dina Asana
Amrit Kaur	" "
Lakshmi Bai Rajwade	Malini Bai Sukthankar
Shareefah Hamid Ali	Lakshmi N Menon
Rameshwari Nehru	Uimila Mehta
Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit	" "
" " "	" "
Kamaladevi	Kulsum Sayani
" "	" "
Hansaben Mehta	" "

ASSOCIATION  
of the  
ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

List of Members of the Standing Committee 1947

*President and Chairwoman*

Lady Rama Rau, A I W O Central Office Gilder Tank Bldg Bombay 7

*Vice-Presidents*

Mrs. Urmila Mehta 15th Road, Khar, Bombay 21

Mrs. Kulsum Sayani "Rupa Villa" Cumbala Road, Bombay 26

Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan Gilchrist Gardens Chetput Madras

" Anasuyabai Kale Dhantoli Nagpur C. P

" Radhadevi Goenka, Madan Mahal Akola Berar

Masuma Begum Hosain Ali Khan, Khairatabad Hyderabad (Deccan)

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*Hon Treasurer*

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Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit 2, Butler Road, Lucknow U P

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Bombay 7

Mrs. S O Mukerjee 24/1 Ballygunge Circular Road Calcutta

Shrimati Sharadaben Mehta Near Gujarat College Ahmedabad

Shrimati Hansaben Mehta Khambhatta Hall Altamont Road Bombay 26

*Members-in-Charge Constituents*

Mrs. Hannah Sen Lady Irwin College Sikandra Road New Delhi

*Member-in-charge, Foreign Contacts*

Shrimati Kamaladevi, A. I. W. C. Central Office, Bombay 7

*Legal Adviser, A. I. W. C.*

Mrs Mithan J. Lam, "The Lily" Cumballa Hill, Bombay 26

*Editors, "Roshni"*

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Hindustani „ Mrs Hajrah Begum, Lucknow Women's Association,  
Mall Road, Lucknow, U. P.

*Hony Secy, All-India Women's Education Fund Association*

Mrs Sewa Singh Gill, 23, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi

*Hony Secretary, All-India Save the Children Committee*

Mrs. Urmila Mehta, 15th Road, Khar, Bombay 21

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Traffic in Women and Children : Shrimati Pushpavati Mehta "Vikash  
Griha", P. O. Anandnagar, Ahmedabad

*Economic Section*

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Bombay 4

Indigenous Industries : Mrs Jayashri Raju, "Nishat", Darabshaw  
Road, Off Nepean Sea Road, Bombay 26.

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Schools Committees Office, Gilder Tank Bldg, Bombay 7.

*Health Section*

Sectional Head : Dr Maitreyi Bose, 47, Chowringhee Road, Calcutta  
Food : Dr Phularenu Guha, 5, Janak Road, Calcutta

*Educational Section*

Sectional Head : Miss Leilamam Naidu, Hyderabad (Deccan).



*Political Section.*

Sectional Head Mrs Anasuyabai Kale Dhantoli Nagpur C P

*Cultural Section*

Sectional Head Mrs. Kamla S Dongerkery 'Sital Mahal' Walkeshwar Road, Bombay 6

*Member for Mobile Health Van*

Lady Rama Rau A I W C Central Office Bombay 7

**BRANCH REPRESENTATIVES**

Ajmer Morwara	Miss Sarla Sharda Sharda Bhawan Daulat Bagh Ajmer
Andhra	Miss Konda Parvathydevi Guntur S India
Assam	.. Mrs Suprabha Chawami Narayanpur Upland Road Shillong
Baroda	Miss Tara Hosangadi Ram Nivas, Shivaji Road Dondia Bazar Baroda
Bengal Central	.. Miss Amiya Das Gupta, Head Mistress Carmichael Girls School Krishnagar Dt. Nadia Bengal
Bengal East	Mrs Ram Sen Judge's House Ramna Dacca
Bengal West	Mrs Shantilata De C/o Mr Kunsilal De Pleader Bankura
Berar	Mrs Pramila Oke Rajasthan Bhawan Akola (Berar)
Bhavnagar	Shrimati Gauriben Trivedi Tapi Bhawan Waghawall Road Bhavnagar (Kathliwar)
Bhopal	Miss Mohini Srivastava Bhopal State Women's Conference C I Press Building Bhopal C I
Bihar	Shrimati Kamal Kamini Prasad C/o Ishwari Nandan Prasad Esq Advocate Kadam Kuan Patna
Bombay	Miss Shantabai Dhumkar Bhat Jivanji Lane Thakurdwar Bombay
Calcutta	Mrs Sudha Maxumdar 1 Robinson Street, Calcutta
C P North	Mrs Kusum Mehta 13 Marhatal Jubbulpore C I
C P South	Mrs Shantabai Madkholkar "Shanta Nivas" Motel Mills Road Nagpur City
Cochin	Miss P Lakshmi Kutty Pullet House Trichur Cochin State
Delli	Mrs Asma Tyeb Hussain 10 Euston Lane New Delhi
Gujara	Mrs Vimala Halbe Becher Road Bulsar
Gwalior	Mrs Anasuya Pearce Empress Road Gwalior, C I
Hyderabad (Du)	.. Mrs Premilata Gupta "Indira Hills Hyderabad (Deccan)

Hyderabad (Sind) ..	Mrs Jasoti Malaney, "Om Niwas", Gidu Road, Hyderabad (Sind)
Indore ..	Mrs Rajani Khandkar, 70 Jail Road, Indore, C I
Jath ...	Miss Manorama Khabade, Kanyashala, Jath State ( Bijapur )
Junagadh .	Miss Ranjan Acharya, C/o. Dr K. V Acharya, Nagar Wada, Junagadh.
Karnatak ..	Mrs Umabai Kundapur, Karnatak Press, Hubli, S M.C,
Kashmir ..	Mrs B Ghami, Jamalatta, Srinagar, Kasim
Kolhapur ...	Shrimati Indirabai G Deshpande, 10th Lane, Rajaram-puri, Kolkapur State.
Konkan ,..	Mrs Saraswatibai Inamdar, Sudha Kunj, Alibag Dt Kolaba
Madras ...	Shrimati Sita Devi, Sylvan Lodge, Mylapore, Madras
Maharashtra .	Mrs Yamutai Kirloskar, Kirloskarwadi ( Dt Satara )
Malabar ,	Mrs Sita Ramaswami, Grace Cottage, Convent Road, Calicut, South Malabar
Mysore ..	Mrs Kamalamma Dasappa, Mahila Seva Samaja, Basavangudi, Bangalore City
N. W. F P ..	Miss K Paintal, Principal, Girls' College, Abbottabad
Oissa	Shrimati Nishamoni Devi, Rajabagicha, Cuttack
Phaltan	Mrs. Janakibai Godbole, Phaltan State ( Deccan )
Punjab Cental ..	Miss Puran Mehta, ' Kapilavastu ', 14, Edwards Road, Lahore.
Sandur -	
Sangli	Mrs Shantabai Kashalkar, C/o H H. the Rani Sahab of Sangli, Sangli, S. M C
Sind	Dr Mrs Anna Thomas, 45, Bunder Road, Karachi
Tamil Nad .	Mrs B. Ayeshamma, 179 Vakil New Street, Madurai, S India
U P Agra ...	Mrs Rupa Kishen Aga, Dudhwala Bungalow, Civil Lines, Cawnpore, U P
U P Oudh .	Mrs Prakashvati Pal, " Sathi press, " Hewett Road, Lucknow

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#### Central Office A.-I.W.C.

Mrs Avabai Wadia Secretary, Central office, A -I W C , Gilder Tank Building, Bombay 7

## LIST OF DELEGATES AKOLA

### Ajmer Merwara

Sarla Sharda  
Kamala Sharda

### Andhra

Konda Parvathydevi  
Neti Chandravati  
J Sumitramma  
T Pankajam  
Kokila Doraiswamy  
Rajam Bharati  
Parijatham Naidu

### Beroda

Tara Hosangadi  
Suchalata Arto  
Sushila Kolhatkar  
Suchalata Pradhan  
Malatibai Patkar  
Manoramabai Hosangadi  
Tarabai Khot  
Shakuntala Tato  
Sudha Apte  
Sushila Kumari Pandit  
Saraswati Pandit  
Sushila Zaveri  
Kusum Patkar  
Tehmina Gasdar  
Pushpaben Kothari  
Gangubai Patwardhan

### Bengal East

Prity Sen  
Kalpana Dutt

### Bengal West

Usha Halder

### Berar

Tarabai Ranadive  
N Sathé

D Jog  
G Soman  
K. Thakur  
Gltabai Sano  
Mrs Latif  
N Khare  
L. Chafekar  
Prabhavati Mahajan  
Gulabai Kothari  
Indirabai Barve  
Radhadevi Goenka  
Pranila Oke  
Durgabai Joshi  
Satyavati Agasho  
Tara Mashruwala  
Savitabai Parekh  
Manutai Kolhatkar  
Kamalabai Konde  
Satyabhamabai Kohale  
Sulochanabai Patil  
Mallinibai Shekdar  
Radhabai Abhyankar  
Kalindibai Ghate  
Mangalabai Shrikhande  
Sushilabai Pandit  
Chandravati Abhyankar  
Laxmibai Purnik  
Sumatibai Parnaik

### Bhavnagar

Gauriben Trivedi  
Sushila Mehta  
Shantaben Mehta

### Bhopal

Mohini Srivastava  
Rukminidevi Agrawal  
Shardadevi Agrawal  
Liladevi Agrawal  
Lakshmi Devi

Sarju Devi Malaviya  
Anup Mohanlal Parekh  
Putrabai Sihore

### **Bombay**

Dhanvanthi Rama Rau  
Hansa Mehta  
Kulsum Sayani  
Malinibai Sukthankar  
Mithan Lam  
Kamaladevi  
Urmila Mehta  
Hajrah Begum  
Jayashri Raji  
Shantabai Mukherji  
Kapila Khandwala  
Shantabai Daundkar  
Bindu Modi  
M. Malandkar  
Manjula Gandhi  
Babiben Moolji Dayal  
Kumudini Choudhury  
Umabai Joshi  
Lakshmbai Gogte  
Kusum Ranadive  
Yamuna Mokashi  
Kamalabai Sohni  
Kumudini Dixit  
Gangabai Erande  
Manoramabai Chaphekar  
Krishnabai Joshi  
Nirmala Mokashi  
Sarla Mehta  
Usha Mehta  
Sheshini Daru  
Mrinalaben Desai  
Shirinben Havewala  
Safurakhan Usmani  
Kamal Dhume  
Lak Fatehally

### **Calcutta**

Maitreyi Bose  
Saudamini Mehta

Phularenu Guha  
Renu Chakravarty  
Renukana Sarbadhikary  
Sudha Roy  
Namita Maitra  
Manikuntala Sen  
Kamal Sanyal  
Madhuri Das Gupta  
Phullara Roy  
Suhasini Ganguly  
Miss Nelson

### **C. P. North**

Janak Malhotra  
Kusum Mehta  
Sushila Pradhan

### **C. P. South**

Anasuyabai Kale  
Tara K. Pradhan  
Mathurabai Dravid  
Shantabai Madkholkar  
Saralabai Bhawe  
Shantabai Mankeshwar  
Kusum Wankhede

### **Cochin**

P. Lakshmi Kutty  
K. M. R. Menon

### **Delhi**

Kitty Shiva Rao  
Raksha Saran  
Mrs. C. Tasir  
Mrs. Sultan Singh  
Sarla Gupta

### **Gujarat**

Pushpavati Mehta  
Padma Mehta  
Charumati Yodh

Ganguben Hadkar  
 Porochisti Glnwala  
 Jyotsna Shukla  
 Shantaben Vora  
 Kusumben Dholabhai

#### Gwalior

Lakshmi Bai Rajwade  
 Krishnubai Phatak  
 Prabhavati Joshi  
 Ramabai Apte

#### Hyderabad (Deccan)

Lallamani Naidu  
 Masuma Hossain Ali Khan  
 Rungamma Obul Reddy  
 A. Kirloskar  
 Mrs. Anwarulla  
 Mrs. A. Hafiz  
 Mrs. V. Vanderman

#### Hyderabad (Sind)

Toj Kumari Punwani  
 Vishni C. Ohandiramani  
 Gul M. Sipahimalani

#### Indore

Rajani Khandkar  
 Ganga Shikhanavis  
 Vimal Kher  
 Sita Dahan  
 Sarjuba  
 Tarabai Lakre  
 Jyotsna Mehta  
 Shalini Bai Joglekar

#### Junagadh

Ranjan Acharya  
 Devi Masumdar  
 Kapila Shukla

#### Karnatak

Umahai Kundapur  
 Sumitrabai Sohni  
 Jankibai Chhatro

#### Kolhapur

Indirabai Deshpande  
 Mai Altavadekar  
 Sulochana Sabinis

#### Konkan

Saraswatibai Inamdar  
 Sitabai Joshi  
 Manoramabai Deorukhkar

#### Madras

Ammu Swaminadhan  
 Savitri Rajan  
 Sister Subba Lakshmi

#### Maharashtra

Yamutai Kirloskar  
 Banutai Deshpande  
 Malatibai Agarkar  
 Nalinibai Chitnis  
 Indirabai Marathe  
 Usha Devi Gokhale  
 Sushilabai Vaidya  
 Tarabai Chitale  
 Saraswatibai Kirloskar  
 Mrs. Sohoni  
 Yamutai Barve  
 Indirabai Phanikar  
 Tarabai Ranade  
 Sumati Godbole  
 Indirabai Bapat  
 Indira Patankar  
 Saraswatibai Sathé  
 Indirabai Deodhar  
 Kamal Kamat  
 Indirabai Bhajekar  
 Venutai Lele

Banatai Shembekar  
Radhabai Apte  
Kamalabai Wadekar  
Mrs Ambekar

#### Mysore

Kamalamma Dasappa  
Kameshwari Amma  
Lakshmi Devi  
Mercy Isaac  
Sushila Lingiah  
Indirabai  
Honnamma  
Kamalabai  
Vijayabai  
Mrs R B Subrahmanyam  
Gangabai  
Jayalakshmiamma  
M R Lakshamma  
Parvatibai Kaive

#### N W.F P.

K Paintal  
N Hoon  
P Rajpal Singh

#### Phaltan

Janakibai Godbole  
Malati Godbole  
Tarabai Patwardhan  
Kamalabai Karnik  
Indirabai Bhatt

#### Punjab Central

Perin Ramesh Chandra  
Vidyavati Seth  
Snehalata Sharma  
Vimal Kanta  
Gurbachan Kaur  
Lavender Kaur  
Lajjavati Hooja  
Vidyavati Aiyar

Uma Sayal  
Janak Madan  
Sushiladevi Motiram  
Puran Devi Kapur  
Puran Devi Mehta  
Prakashvati Bhatia  
Sheila Bhatia  
Snehalata Sanyal  
Mrs G. Ghosh  
Shakuntala Gaigai  
Swatantrata Bhagat  
Puran Mehta  
Lajja Datta  
Usha Bhagat  
Himadri Gangahar  
Laj Bedi  
Sanyukta Puri

#### Sangli

Shantabai Kashalkar  
Shrimatibai Kalantie  
Shantabai Patwardhan

#### Tamil Nad

Ayeshamma Balakrishnan  
Saroja Rajan  
N S Shakuntala

#### U. P. Agra

Sadhana Gupta  
Rup Kumari Aga  
Sushila Rohatgi  
Manorama Satin  
Gyaneshwari Bansal  
Indumati Narvane  
Bani Gupta

#### U P Oudh

Lakshmi N Menon  
Kamala Ramaswarup  
Sossa Mathew

#### Special Delegate

Tarabai Modak ( Bombay )

**PROGRAMME**  
10th Session Akola (Berar)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Diary of Events</i>	<i>Time</i>
Wednesday 25-12-46	Arrival of Standing Committee Members	Evening
Thursday 26-12-46	Arrival of Standing Committee Members Standing Committee Meeting (Subjects Committee) Standing Committee Meeting	Morning 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. 2.30 to 6 P.M.
Friday 27-12-46	Opening of the Exhibition and Swadeshi Bazar .. Standing Committee Meeting .. Standing Committee Meeting .. Hurda Party .. Standing Committee Meeting .. Arrival of Delegates ..	9 A.M. to 10 A.M. 10.30 A.M. to 1 P.M. 2.30 P.M. to 4 P.M. 4.30 to 6 P.M. 6.30 to 8.30 P.M. Evening
Saturday 28-12-46	Arrival of Delegates Physical Culture Demonstration .. Registration of Delegates Opening of the Conference Variety Entertainment	Morning 8.30 to 9 A.M. 9 A.M. to 12.30 P.M. 3 P.M. to 7 P.M. 8.30 P.M.
Sunday 29-12-46	First Sitting of the Conference Second Sitting of the Conference Public Meeting	9.30 A.M. to 1 P.M. 2.30 P.M. to 5.30 P.M. 8 P.M.
Monday 30-12-46	Third Sitting of the Conference Submission of the Nomination Papers .. Fourth Sitting of the Conference .. Declaration of Nominations Drama (admission by tickets)	9.30 A.M. to 1 P.M. 12.30 P.M. to 1 P.M. 2.30 P.M. to 5.30 P.M. 5 P.M. 8.30 P.M.
Tuesday 31-12-46	Distribution of Voting Papers Fifth Sitting of the Conference Submission of Voting Papers Sixth Sitting of the Conference .. Declaration of Election Results Vidya Mandir (Akola) Programme Departure of Delegates	9 A.M. to 10 A.M. 10 A.M. to 12 Noon 12 Noon to 1 P.M. 2.30 to 5.30 P.M. 4 P.M. Evening Evening
Wednesday 1-1-47	Departure of Delegates .. New Standing Committee Meeting Departure of Standing Committee Members	Morning 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. Evening

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DHANVANTHI RAMA RAU  
*PRESIDENT*  
ALL INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE  
AKOLA (BERAR), 1946



# The Nineteenth Session Of The All-India Women's Conference

The Nineteenth Session of the All-India Women's Conference, held at Akola, at the end of December 1946, proved yet another land-mark in the history of the organisation. Although a small town in Berar, Akola attracted not only the largest number of Delegates, any Session has yet had from all over India, but also the largest number of visitors from all parts of the country, particularly Berar. Distinguished visitors from foreign lands, representing the International Alliance of Women, the Liaison Group in Great Britain, Y W C.A. of America and other social institutions, gave an international colour to the proceedings, while the presence of eminent sympathisers like H. H. Princess Durru Shehvar of Berar, H. H. the Rani Sahab of Sangli and Rani Laxmidevi of Phaltan added special grace to the occasion. The huge pandal, specially erected by the Reception Committee, with clear foresight, for accommodating 10,000 people, proved hardly enough for the enthusiastic crowds that attended the Session and followed the deliberations with rapt attention throughout the Session. 400 girl volunteers with saffron *saris* kept order while about an equal number of boy volunteers were at the beck and call.

Azadnagar, consisting of the main Conference Pandal, the Swadeshi Exhibition grounds called Laxmi Bagh and the Mother India Pavilion, was visited by a very large number of people every day. The public meeting held in one evening during the occasion, and presided over by H. H. the Princess of Berar, was attended by not less than 12,000 men and women. The Variety Entertainments, where several of the delegates also took part, drew thousands of men and women of all walks of life.

In short, it was manifest in Akola what esteem the All-India Women's Conference commands in public mind. Akola, also, not only proved the possibilities of immense growth of the Conference, but also our women's capacity of organisation on a large scale.

## PROCEEDINGS

Saturday 28th Dec. 1946, 3-30 P M

The Session was held in a large pandal specially erected for the purpose, in the grounds of the Government High School for Boys Akola. The proceedings began with a welcome song.

SHRIMATI HANSABEN MEHTA the retiring President in proposing Lady Rama Rau to the Chair said

It is my pleasant duty to propose Lady Rama Rau to the Chair. I was told the story today that when you take office it is the proudest day of your life and when you relinquish this it is the happiest day of your life. I feel very happy that I give the helm of the Conference in the able hands of our new President Lady Rama Rau.

"The women's movement has gained a great impetus since the last few months after the war. Women all over the world are thinking in terms of world peace and a new order. The All-India Women's Conference too, has joined hands with the other organisations of the world who are striving towards a better understanding in a better world. It was my privilege when I was in America to make this Conference known to the United Nations and put it on the list of international organisations. This Conference has, therefore, a great duty to perform in the years to come. It has not only to lead the women of India and the women of the world but it has to contribute its share in the building of a new world.

"The women's movement in India has also grown from strength to strength. Its aim is to unite the women of India and also through them the women of the world. The A.I.W.O. stands for the women of all creeds and communities. I hope it will always remain a united force and see that through women the country is united. I on your behalf pin this badge of Presidentship on Lady Rama Rau."

HER HIGHNESS THE RANI SAHEB OF SANGLI in seconding the proposal, said: My sister Hansa Mehta, has proposed that Lady Rama Rau should accept the Presidentship of the 19th Session of the A.I.W.O. and I feel great pleasure in seconding the resolution moved by her. It is our good fortune that we have as our President Lady Rama Rau for we could not have a more able and experienced person than she. I have every hope that you are entirely in agreement with my views. I first got acquainted with Lady Rama Rau at the first Round Table Conference. She had taken a very active part in all social and other activities and ever since she had come into touch with the A.I.W.O. she has been rendering the greatest possible service to the cause of women. Her efforts in collecting large sums of money for the Bhopal Relief Fund have made her very popular all over India. She has also played an

important role in the cause of women throughout the world. The A.I.W.C. is affiliated to the International Alliance of Women and she represented India on its Board for many years. It will therefore, be seen that her choice for the Presidentship of the 19th Session of the A.I.W.C. is most fitting. I have every hope that you will fully co-operate with Lady Rama Rau in her arduous work which lies ahead.

LADY RAMA RAU, who was garlanded by Shrimati Radhadevi Goenka, Chairwoman of the Reception Committee, then took the Chair.

MRS KULSUM SAYANI, Hon. General Secretary, then read out the Messages of Greetings and good wishes for the success of the Conference, received from the following :—

MESSAGES

The Hon'ble Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru  
Madame Soong Ching Ling ( Madame  
Sun Yat-Sen )

Lady Pethic-Lawrence of Peaslake  
His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal  
Dr. Hanna Rydh of Sweden

Mrs. Corbett Ashby  
Her Highness Maharani Vijaya Raje  
Scindia of Gwalior

Miss Agatha Harrison  
Shrimati Sarojini Naidu  
Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi  
Lady Vidyagauri R. Nilkanth  
Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji  
Her Highness Maharani Setu Parvati  
Bayi of Travancore

Mrs. M. E. Cousins  
Rajkumari Amrit Kaur  
Begum Hamid Ali  
Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru  
Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit  
Lady Joshi  
Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani  
Shrimati Radhabai Subbarayan  
Mrs. Jessie M. G. Street, Australia

Madame Bodil Begtrup, Denmark  
Mrs. W. S. New, U. S. A.  
Shri M. S. Aney  
Seth Govind Das, Council of State  
Shrimati Mindula Sarabhai  
Dewan Bahadur V. V. Joshi  
Lady Gunwanti Maharaj Singh  
Madame Zahka Shihabi, President,  
Palestine Arab Women's  
Association, Jerusalem  
Liaison Group of British Women's  
Societies co-operating with  
A.I.W.C.  
Women's International League,  
British Section  
Women's Council on Indian Affairs  
Women's International League for  
Peace and Freedom  
Miss Daisy D. Solomon, Chairman,  
British Commonwealth League  
Madame Carolina Hoslett, President,  
British Federation of Business and  
Professional Women  
Madame Chiang Lee, President, Singa-  
pore Women's Federation

Freem's Service Unit Calcutta.  
Madame Nina Popova President, The  
Soviet Women's Anti Fascist  
Committee Moscow

Miss Maud Dickinson London  
The Mahilla Seva Mandal Kolhapur  
The Nationalist Party of India  
Madame Adela Mouktar Aldelkader  
President Women's Union, Damas

Council of Jewish Women's Organi-  
sations Telaviv

Jewish Women's Equal Rights  
Association Jerusalem

Shri Kanada Shastri

Shri Dashmukh, Minister O P  
& Berar

Dr Hasan, Minister, O. P & Berar  
Mrs. Wazir Singh Hissar

Shrimati Hungamma of Benares

Shri Makhanlal Chaturvedi  
of Khandawa

Shrimati Vinayalal Dashmukh of  
Amraoti

Mrs Hannah Sen

Mrs G R Billimoria

Miss Devi Valliram Hyderabad (Sind)

Shri V B Chawbal of Amraoti

Mrs Ronuka Ray

Miss Anandidovi Khomchand

### SOME IMPORTANT MESSAGES

#### 1 *The Honble Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru*

No. 3497-PS My greetings and good wishes to the Women's Conference  
Trust Indian women will play their full part in independent India.

#### 2 *Madame Soong Ching Lang (Madame Sun Yat Sen) China*

"At this time the pressure of our relief and welfare work is so great that  
we find it impossible to take advantage of this opportunity to know your prob-  
lems and to present our own. However be assured that we are interested in  
your Conference and we would appreciate being kept informed of your acti-  
vities and results with wishes of greatest success."

#### 3 *Lady Pethick-Lawrence of Peaslake.*

India has contributed a great heritage in the past to the culture of the  
whole world Her history her literature her traditions have moulded  
thought and civilization She has transmitted throughout past centuries a  
noble ideal of womanhood I look to the women of India to infuse new-  
life into our world wide Movement of human fellowship and human service  
I shall follow with the deepest interest the deliberations of this Conference."

#### 4 *Shrimati Sarojini Naidu*

"Deeply disappointed unable attend Session I hope that under your wise  
and distinguished guidance the Conference will gain ever more in influence and

importance and become the recognised and unchallenged voice of Indian women in the large fields of national and international work for the country's progress. Affectionate greetings to all members."

5 *H. H. Maharani Vijaya Raje Scindia of Gwalior.*

"...May all its noble efforts for the progress and enlightenment of Indian women be crowned with success by securing for them their rightful place in all spheres of life in this great land of ours."

6 *His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal.*

"The importance of the part that women must play in shaping the future of this country if national developments to proceed on sound and fruitful lines cannot be exaggerated. I wish the All-India Women's Conference every success in its endeavour to help the solution of those complex and difficult problems which face our country in every sphere of national activity."

7 *Mrs Jessie M G. Street, Australia.*

"The Australian Women's Charter Federal Committee sends greetings and good wishes to the A I W C. We congratulate the Indian women on having achieved the honor of representing India at meetings of the United Nations Organisation and its principal organs. We stretch out our hands to the members of the A I W C in a gesture of friendship and support."

8 *Madame Nina Popova, Moscow*

"New Year congratulations to women of India from the Soviet Women's Anti-Fascist Committee wishing success in your activity."

9 *Dr. Hanna Rydh, Sweden*

"Vividly remembering last year's stimulating meeting. Send warm wishes for the prosperity of your work and your country."

10 *British Section, Women's International League*

"At this critical moment in the relationships between our two countries, we send special greetings and thoughts to your Conference at Akola. Holding to the belief that the transfer of power from British to Indian hands can be achieved by peaceful means, the British Section unites with you in the determination to do all possible to make this belief a reality."



## WELCOME ADDRESS

*Srimati Ruthless Gonda M. L. A.* Chairwoman Reception Committee  
 Welcoming the president and Delegates said

I am extremely happy to welcome you all to this small town in Berar. I feel utterly humble in your presence when I think of your life long and enviable record of service and devotion to the motherland. The Reception Committee has really undertaken a difficult task in inviting you to this small city from distant parts of the country. Though we have tried to receive you to the best of our ability we are still aware of serious deficiencies. It is at great personal inconvenience that you have come over here and probably you may have to put up with many more during your stay with us. We are keenly conscious of the limitations of our arrangements and my diffidence gets doubled when I think how by graciously accepting our invitation you have given us this proud privilege of welcoming you by willingly foregoing all the many amenities afforded by the big cities from where many of you come. However, we believe, you will be one with us and feel quite at home during your stay and not think of our numerous shortcomings.

Berar has special importance in the history of India since ancient times. We find a description of Berar in the the Mahabharata. Historically we might say that Berar was the land of Great Women. Rukmani and Damayanti about whom we read in the *Puranas* were daughters of Vidharbha. Even in ancient times Akola seems to have formed part of Vidharbha. During the Gupta Era and even later Berar gained a significant place in the sphere of literature. Valldharbhi was recognised as a much adored style of writing in Sanskrit and Prakrit languages and gained as its votaries great poets like Bhavbhuti.

About 300 B.C. Berar was a separate State ruled by a king and formed part of Asoka's Empire—what we now-a-days call a mandatory territory under the Imperial Crown. Many a time has it been referred to as a kingdom with separate territorial jurisdiction of its own. May be it was about the time of the Pallava or Yadhava dynasties and in more recent historic past the Andhra, Chalukya, Malva and Yadhava dynasties ruled over this Province from time to time. After 1294 it came under the Muslim domination and the Khilji, Tuglak and Bahmani dynasties ruled in succession. Towards the end of the 15th Century Muhammadshah divided this Kingdom into two sections of Gavil and Mahur. Many things still exist that are reminiscent of this act. Narnala, Mahur Akot, Basim Mehkar Mailghat Ellichpur and innumerable other places have been the scenes of battles in times past. Narnala, Patur and Karanja carry the mind back to the days when Jainism spread and prospered. And in the still silent ruins of Narnala Fort is concealed the history of forgotten centuries. In Akola itself there is an old Fort which was constructed by the Moghul Emperors. During Aurangzeb's time Akola was given as a *Jagir* to one of his ministers.



SHRIMATI RADHADEVI GOENKA, M L A  
*CHAIRWOMAN*  
RECEPTION COMMITTEE, AKOLA



Asadkhan and he sent a certain Abdullatif as his representative to manage things on his behalf. The East India Co., 22 years after taking possession of Berar, made it a separate district in the year 1775.

Akola has been since many years past the centre of various activities. Today in politics, education and literature it stands out as an important city in C P and Berar. In regard to the advancement of women, Berar does not lag behind. Our Province is free from Purdah which has been the curse of our Hindu and Muslim sisters in many places. Here women are respected more than in other Provinces. The progress in women's education is encouraging though not quite satisfactory and we have still much to do in this direction. We have not been able to open new schools rapidly enough to keep pace with the evergrowing number of girl students seeking admission in educational institutions owing to the spread of education and comparative freedom, the intellectual powers of the women of this Province can go any where at any time without fear or danger, but beyond this we have done very little to promote the liberties of our women. I am confident that through your direction and effort this movement will gather momentum and strength.

I entertain great hopes of this Conference. We have already tried to the best of our ability and means at our command to advance the cause of women in our Province and particularly in this city. Many institutions are separately working towards this end. In Akola we have the District Mahila Parishad in addition to the Rashtriya Mahila Mandal. Also we have Sarda Samaja—a ladies club. Regular arrangements have been made for intellectual and physical training as well as for the teaching of arts like Drawing, Painting, Needlework, Music, etc. in Matri Mandir which I myself have been running for the last 5 years. But the women of this city have not been able to take full advantage of such opportunities provided for them. It has not somehow received sufficient response. I trust your visit to this Province will strengthen the movement and the exalted examples of your lives will spur them on to work for it with one heart and one mind. The women of this city will realise within the five days of this Conference that this is not merely an occasion for the show of hollow eloquence put up by a talkative and garrulous group of women. Rather it is intended to prepare a solid and constructive scheme to be carried out religiously throughout the coming year. Then alone will this effort and labour of today be proved fruitful.

We are meeting today at a time when the present sharply divides the past from the future. On either side of us are unbridgeable yawning gulfs and we are able to perceive beyond the gulf a big and beautiful promontory—the land of promise. It is upto us either to advance or to recede but surely there is no going back! A step back and we will be in the abyss. One more

stronuous effort and we reach the Promised land. This is the problem which faces every nation and hence it faces us also. The victorious Allies are about to repeat the mistakes committed in the Versailles Treaty. The devil of Distrust is apt to consume the whole of humanity and its shadow is cast even on India. The coming freedom has brought with it many intricate problems. The political differences in our country have deteriorated to a dangerous degree. When we hear of what happened in Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Meerut, Allahabad, Ludhiana, East Bengal and Bihar we feel like hanging our heads in shame. The catastrophe of the riots has thrust a great responsibility on us. In this raging madness of religious feuds between community and community the condition of women has deteriorated to an appalling extent. These circumstances have forced to the front this question of first rate importance—"How to protect our Women." The last ten or fifteen years have witnessed a great progress among women in the allied fields—political, social and educational. And today in the provincial as well as in the central legislatures women are acquitting themselves with distinction alongside of men. In politics women have filled responsible posts and have done and are still doing splendid work.

The President of the Conference, Lady Rama Rau is the pride of the women of India. Even from her days she dedicated herself to the service of women. At a time when education was scarce and social reform unknown she carried the message of a new awakening from house to house, and created a new consciousness amongst women through her solid and constructive work. Wherever she went, whether in India or in Europe or in Africa she never lost sight of her mission in life and worked unremittingly for it. Her firmness, skill and personality have given her an admirable capacity to fight against odds however heavy. We are, indeed proud to have been able to secure a President of her eminence.

Shrimati Kamaladevi is a woman of international fame. She is the inspiration of all the progressive political and social elements everywhere. Her leadership has appealed irresistibly to young men and women of our Country.

Mrs. Hansa Mehta who is widely travelled has been responsible for increasing the prestige of the women of India in foreign countries. We are all well-acquainted with her service and sacrifice and today our country is not tired of eulogising her.

Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, a former President of the All-India Women's Conference, has acquired a world-wide fame with her brilliant intellectual

qualities and admirable handling of her brief as the leader of the Indian Delegation to U.N.O. She has enormously raised the prestige of the Indian women in the eyes of the world by the inimitable way in which she has piloted the Indian cause in South Africa, achieving signal success against so great a veteran politician as General Smuts.

We are also proud of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who has given proof of her mature wisdom as a delegate to the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation.

Purposely I am not saying anything about Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who deserves our profound respect and admiration. She is the beacon light of every Indian woman. Today's awakening amongst women is the result of her tireless service. I respectfully bow before her.

Who is ignorant of the name of Ammu Swaminathan the mother of Lieut. Col. Lakshmi, the heroine of the Ram of Jhansi Regiment of the I.N.A. Every child in the street pulls himself up with pride and fervour on hearing her name.

In a country which is full of such brave women it is a matter of great regret to find that they should be victimised and reduced to such pitiable plight by religious fanatics. Not only myself but the entire womanhood of India looks up to this Conference for enlightenment and solution of urgent problems of this kind. Today we have a pressing need of your advice as to how we should put an end to this humiliating situation. A Women's Conference like this can tackle this problem more easily.

A Conference of this type alone can successfully counteract the virus of communalism in this land of diverse castes and creeds. We should consider many more problems and chalk out our future programme in the light of past events.

I do not want to waste much of your time. I hope that all-women will truly carry out the resolutions that will be passed in this Conference and that this will impart strength of mind to them. I stand on behalf of the Reception Committee to again request you to forgive us for our poor arrangements and to extend our wholehearted welcome to you all. I am only a humble instrument. In fact, the whole of Akola, nay, the whole of Berar is overflowing with happiness and joy at your auspicious arrival to this city. Throughout the Province wherever we went in connection with this Conference, we found both among men and women a feeling of friendliness and respect for you all. I, therefore, welcome you on behalf of the people of Berar. Don't take it as a formal sentiment when I assure you in all sincerity that I really feel that I have given you all great trouble in calling you to this place. We could not make proper arrangements for providing enough facilities for board and lodging befitting the

honour and greatness of our illustrious guests, nor could it have been possible for us. Whatever we could, we did and surely there was no lack of enthusiasm or willingness on the part of the people of this city. Many institutions and associations in Akola have given their fullest co-operation and helped us to the best of their ability to make this Conference a success. The Reception Committee heartily thanks them all.

Mrs. Kulsum Sayani Hon. General Secretary A I W C then read the following Report of work.

### REPORT 1946.

The last Session of the All India Women's Conference was held on the 28th December 1945 at Hyderabad (Sind) exactly one year ago and hence the period under review is less than the previous one which lasted one year and eight months. In spite of this short term and that of the exceedingly difficult times arising out of the strikes and strifes and the unsettled conditions thereof, the Conference has carried out its routine work vigorously and thoroughly consolidating the work of the last term. The All India Women's Conference has now gained international recognition and to-day it is the largest Organisation of Women in India having a membership of 30,000. Three non-active branches have been revived and 4 branches and 30 constituent branches have been given recognition to, bringing the total to 44 branches and 215 constituent branches.

During the period under review the Standing Committee met twice at Hyderabad (Sind) and Calcutta. The draft of the constitution kindly revised by the Hon. Mr. Mangaldas Palkya, the President of the Bombay Legislative Council, was circulated and will be placed before the Session of the Conference. "Roshni" the Conference Journal has become a monthly publication in three languages e.g. English, Hindi and Urdu. The latter two came out as separate journals from March 1946. All three have gained immensely in popularity and promise to be self-supporting soon. The Editors Mrs. Lakshmi Menon and Hajra Begum both deserve our congratulations and best wishes.

The period under review claims the proud privilege of having many of its members participating in international affairs. The President Shrimati Hansa Mehta herself was appointed to the U.N.O. Sub-Commission on "The Status of Women" to the Commission on "Human Rights". This Commission was later granted the status of full Commission and Shrimati Hansa Mehta's achievements in America have given our Conference an international status. Our Conference is now on the list of organisations recognised by the United Nations Organisation. Begum Hamid Ali has since been appointed on the same Commission. Our Patron the Hon. Shrimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit—the only woman leader of a Delegation to the Assembly of the United Nations Organisation fought with success the case of Indians in South Africa.

was internationally acknowledged for her achievements and we are, indeed, proud of this Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, also our Patron, has been appointed Vice President on one of the Committees of the U.N.E.S.C.O. and her contribution at the Paris Conference fills us with no little admiration. Miss Konda Parvatidevi and the Maharani of Vizianagaram represented the All-India Women's Conference at the 14th Congress of the International Alliance held at Interlaken in Switzerland. Parvatidevi was the leader and I have had several letters from various people telling me how admirably they acquitted themselves. Mrs. Mitham Lam and Miss Kapila Khandvala represented us at the Australian Women's Second Charter Conference held in Sydney. Mrs. Lam, the leader of the Delegation, has since become the Sheriff of Bombay. Both these delegates toured and gave lectures on the work of the All-India Women's Conference and the food problem in India, which invoked a substantial offer of help from the Australian people. This offer was forwarded to the Food Member of the Government of India. Mrs. Kulsum Sayani, the Hon. General Secretary, represented the Conference at the All-Ceylon Women's Conference in Colombo, and also at the historic Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Jamia Milia Islamia where practically the whole of the Interim Government was present, besides Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Mr. Jinnah. I must not forget to mention that several women members of the Constituent Assembly are our members. In the early part of the year, when the Cabinet Mission came to India, the President Shrimati Hansa Mehta was invited to place the views of the Conference before them.

The main features of work during the period covered by this report are:—

- (1) The Drafting of Charter of "Women's Rights and Duties"
- (2) The Preparing of the "Memorandum on Planning for National Welfare"
- (3) The All-India Food Day.
- (4) The All-India Conference Day

"The Charter of Women's Rights and Duties" and the "Memorandum on Planning for National Welfare" were both circulated to the Provincial, State and the Central Governments. A very encouraging reply from the Vice-President of the Interim Government, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, was received in acknowledgment, saying "Both these subjects greatly interest me and I am sure your pamphlets will do good. I am personally anxious to do everything in my power to advance the cause of women in this country."

The Food Day has been observed throughout the Branches since June the 14th regularly every month. This has been their main activity during the year. Food exhibitions, lectures, demonstrations, and information regarding substitutes for scarcity products were given. Throughout the branches, there was altogether a drive to educate the public in the economic and nutrition value of food grains. One Constituent Branch of Gujerat, namely Broach, went a step further and with the efforts of its members in giving up one cereal from their own rations, in one month were able to save 14,000 lbs. Our Gwalior



Branch is doing admirable work for Adult Education. There are 13 Centres, 8 in the city and 5 in the Districts.

The Conference Day fixed on the November 14th could not be observed in many of our Branches owing to the communal disturbances. Many of our members have been doing valuable relief work in Bengal U P and Gujarat. The Calcutta Branch organised Citizens' Defence Committee consisting of both Hindus and Muslims including representatives of women and students' Organisations. This Committee has sent units both to Bihar and East Bengal. In fact, all Branches in Bengal and in particular the Calcutta Branch, have been greatly pre-occupied with the work of relief and rescue and rehabilitation arising out of the emergency situation. The collections of the All-India Conference Day so far received are—

Rs.	Branches
1,345	Bombay
2 000/	Baroda
2 000/	Hyderabad (Du.) Branch.
1 000/	Maharashtra.
1 000/	Tamil Nad
500/	.. Simla
250/	Hyderabad (Sind)
100/	.. O P Bouthi
100/	Sangli
76/	.. Konkan.
200/	.. Through Begum Masuma Husain Ali Khan.

The Central Office established last term is maintaining good progress. Detailed information along with other data, India and foreign, useful for the All-India Women's Conference work is being gathered by Mrs. Avabai Wadia, the Central Office Secretary in order to compile an All-India Directory of Institutions for Women. Its work has increased much owing to the fact that the Hindi and Urdu "Rashmi" are despatched from the Central Office. The increasing number of subscribers and the inquiries thereof and its accounts take up the entire time of the typist appointed for general help. The Servants of India Society has kindly donated 145 books which form the nucleus of a Library in the Central Office. Owing to printing difficulties, only two publications have been issued during the period under review—both symposia, to which various authors have contributed—

- (1) The Education of Women in Modern India.
- (2) Juvenile Literature in India. (Part I)

The latter is a neat little book edited by Mrs. Dongerkery, the Member-in-Charge of the Cultural Section. She writes to say that this book contains a comprehensive idea of the position of the juvenile literature at the moment, dealing with its historical aspect and also pointing out its deficiencies. She also

suggests the establishment of an All-India publishing house with a central research bureau, which should be either entirely financed or subsidized by the Central Government

Two pamphlets were published in Hindustani, both translations by Hajra Begum:—

- (1) Charter of Women's Rights & Duties.
- (2) Report on Tea Plantation labour in Assam.

Another very useful and prominent activity of the All-India Women's Conference is the Asoka Akber Health Canteen, meant for giving medical relief to isolated villages in India. Mrs. Hilda Seligman, the Founder and the Hon. Organizing Secretary of the Skippo Fund, founded in England, kindly donated this Mobile Van to the All-India Women's Conference. The Van was given a public reception at the Sunderbhai Hall, Bombay, on May the 15th, 1946, where the Prime Minister of Bombay, Mr B G Kher, presided. This Mobile Van was handed to the Bombay Branch for the period of one year and I am glad to say that it is doing very valuable work in a group of villages near Sanjan, 85 miles from Bombay.

The "All-India Save the Children Committee" has been doing useful work in the five permanent homes for children in Bengal, Orissa and Malabar

The Lady Irwin College continues to function successfully. Mrs Hannah Sen, the Directress, informed us that negotiations are being carried on with the Government of India regarding a grant to enable the College:

- (1) To institute a Degree Course in Home Science and
- (2) To train a minimum of 50 graduate teachers in Home Science annually

The Hon General Secretary visited Madras, as a result of which the activities of the Madras Branch were revived under the guidance of Sister Subbalakshmi who is now President of the Branch. The Tamil Nad Province in Madras also caught the enthusiasm and revived its activities under the guidance of Ayeshamma. This Branch had been lying dormant for years. The Hon. General Secretary presided at the Annual Conference of the Karvir Bhagini Mandal of the Kolhapur Branch, inaugurated the Food Day and the Educational Week of the Baroda Branch, inaugurated the Educational Week of the Maharashtra Branch at Thana, presided over the Gujerat Branch Conference held at Bulsar, visited the Delhi, Gwalior, Kirloskarwadi and Bhopal Branches and also Amraoti, Yeotmal and Akola in Berar. The latter place was visited twice in view of the coming Conference.

Ajmer-Merwara and N.W.F.P., both Branches practically extinct for years, have started working again and their delegates are among us to-day.

It is indeed, gratifying to note that to-day we are trying to live up to the ideals of an All India Women's Conference in that we work together irrespective of caste, creed or party politics primarily for India and the women and children of India.

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

*Lady Rama Rau* then rose amidst great ovation to deliver her Presidential Address. At the request from the audience she spoke in Hindustani. She said

Friends

It is with much diffidence that I accept the Presidentship of this great organisation—the All India Women's Conference—in this momentous year of India's history. I feel greatly privileged to assume so responsible an office, and undertake to do so with a full sense of the importance of the work ahead of us and an assurance that I shall endeavour to fulfil my responsibilities to the best of my ability. I thank my supporters for their confidence in me and sincerely hope they will continue to co-operate with and assist me during my term of office. The tasks before us are multitudinous and we are conscious of them today as we have never been before.

It is usual at the time of an all India Session of our Organisation to pause a moment and review the events of the year and to gauge their repercussions on our activities. This last year has been full of the most vital developments in our country within living memory—developments that have moved us to the heights of hope and activity on the one hand, and to the depths of despondency on the other. With the formation of the National Governments in our provinces early this year a confidence was inspired in our people, and an expectancy engendered, that the much discussed post war planning through the long war years would now begin to take shape. With the accredited leaders of the people at the helm of affairs the wrongs of the people for whom they had laboured for years would be righted and India would speedily begin the struggle for progress in all directions—a struggle which could only be carried out with her national leaders in direct command. It filled our hearts with pride to see so many women in our new legislatures women who had made their mark in the Women's Organisation years ago—some of whom were immediately called to high office. The path of the new Governments was by no means an easy one—for industrial and labour strikes the aftermath of the war the food situation in the country and other far reaching problems had to be overcome first before real work could begin. Then came the long negotiations with regard to the Central Government which were followed breathlessly by the country resulting to our intense relief and gratification in a transference of power into the hands of Indian leaders. Our unanimously expressed desire to see our country free and self-governed has been fulfilled and although complete freedom has yet

to be attained, the fact that our feet have been firmly planted on the ladder to that goal fills us with hope for the future. This is a fitting occasion for us to congratulate our political leaders on the success that has crowned their struggle, and as mothers of the nation we offer them our blessings and our prayers at a time when they are faced with the gigantic task of the regeneration of our country and the establishment of wholesome relations with the rest of the world

Recently, however, we have suffered agony and humiliation at the outbreak of communal strife in the country. We have witnessed cruel atrocities on women and children, forced conversions and marriages under compulsion, callous orgies and blood baths. We have no hesitation in expressing our unequivocal condemnation of the propaganda, which has led to such a complete breakdown of normal civilised conditions. Our hearts go out to the victims of these criminal and dastardly activities in the various provinces of India. Our duty demands that we too play our part in the Relief and Rehabilitation work that will go on for a long time, and help actively with the Public Defence organisations set up for strengthening the hands of those, who are determined to re-establish normal conditions. Let our branches form Women's Committees in co-operation with representatives of all communities to bring about happier relations between groups, and help to restore the brotherly love and respect that, we are convinced, are not utterly dead in our hearts. We, as an organisation, voted for non-violence at a time when the Great World War II was being waged. We were then condemned as idealists, as unpractical in our political outlook—but in spite of that we stood by the principle of non-violence. Can we today leave unexpressed our abhorrence of an almost worse type of violence—involving as it does cruelty, treachery and the vicious circle of retaliation? A great field of work lies before us in the years to come to salve the wounds received in these evil days, and to teach our children the lessons of mutual trust and tolerance. The great spiritual inheritance of Hinduism and Islam belongs to us. Let us Hindus and Muslims learn to respect and honour the truths of both faiths. Living as we do, and as we always must, side by side, the only way we can grow and develop in a healthy manner, is to teach and practise mutual love and respect—and these lessons can be best imparted by the mothers of the nation. So may God help us to close this evil chapter in our history and obliterate even the memory of it.

During the 19 years of our existence as the A.I. W. C. the sum total of our achievement has been that we have been able to organise women on an all-India basis—a no mean achievement considering the size of our country and the great percentage of illiteracy amongst us. We have created 200 Centres in both Provinces and Indian States and have attracted 30,000 women as members to take a live interest in questions that affect them and their country, and created in them the desire to work together as Indian women. We

have taught them to travel long distances, to think intelligently to express themselves fearlessly and to work in co-operation for ideals, that must be common to women all over the world. The institutions for which we have been responsible and through which we try to realise our ideals, i.e. The Lady Irwin College for Home Science Delhi, The Children's Homes in Bengal and our latest venture the Village Medical work in Bombay—and the numerous smaller institutions run by the various branches—are a credit to the earnestness of our workers. This work has been accomplished in spite of the fact, that firstly we are an unofficial organisation and our authority is therefore limited, secondly we have no assured financial resources and thirdly we have no trained personnel. Because of the lack of financial security each new venture has meant a great drive for public subscriptions involving the waste of precious time and energy. Courage and persistence however, have not been lacking—and the interest in the work undertaken so occupies our minds that we have been able to bear the humiliation of the frequent rebuffs to which all workers for charitable causes are subjected. We are however grateful to those generous donors who have put faith in our integrity and supported us in our work. For the same reason our workers in a large number of cases had to be honorary workers and this again has limited our activities considerably for the best trained women for a particular job cannot always afford to give us service without remuneration. The majority of our workers, willing and earnest as they are have not the background the knowledge of psychology and sociology of economics and organisation that is usually deemed necessary for the expert handling of social problems. The result is that the right foundations are not laid when workers no matter how ardent their desire to serve, and how great their spirit of self-sacrifice, enter into the social service field without the necessary equipment for the work before them.

During these years we have maintained connection with International Women's Organisations. We have regularly invited foreign visitors and welcomed them in our midst whenever they have honoured us. We have sent our representatives to foreign countries to share in international Conferences. Now that India can organise as a free country—an emphasis on this aspect of our work is indicated. It is a well established fact that the basic demands of women all over the world are in essence the same, and a linking up of women of all countries can only strengthen and clarify the cause for which we stand. Our delegates to these international Conferences have gained valuable experience in methods of work and considerably widened their knowledge of the countries they have visited. They are the two-way ambassadors who have interpreted our complicated problems our aims and aspirations for the future to the countries they have visited and brought back knowledge and information about them to us.

We are today on the threshold of a New Era. There is a consciousness in every country of the world of the Great Forces—Spiritual, Moral, Political

and Economic, that must be harnessed to enable human beings to grow and develop to their full stature, and establish international justice and goodwill which alone can ensure World Peace.

This consciousness has expressed itself in the setting up of institutions like the U.N.O and the U.N.E.S.C.O In the light of the fundamental rights that are being laid down for individuals and for nations, and the efforts that are being made to encourage cultural understanding, our national reconstruction is bound to lose some of its individualistic and narrow character. We will be able to take lessons from the more progressive countries, and in linking up with the rest of the world, adopt a broader outlook altogether

Here in India, when the Constituent Assembly is at work, framing a new Constitution for an Independent Country, it is our duty to be alert and vigilant to ensure the incorporation in this important document of the Rights of Women We have already prepared a Charter of Women's Rights for presentation to this Assembly, in which we have claimed Equality with men with reference to Franchise and economic, social and political opportunities in public life. We have also demanded that marriage should not prejudice the inherent rights of a woman Those are Rights that should be explicitly stated, lest the structure of our new political status be unsound It is particularly important for India, for socially and legally women have suffered repression from ancient times Our progress will be considerably encouraged materially and psychologically, when the state acknowledges our right to equal citizenship and categorically accepts the principle, that no barriers on the ground of sex will stand in the way of a woman's growth and development in public life We have women representatives on the Constituent Assembly, the majority of whom are active workers of our organisation In my opinion, we should set up a strong committee to work in co operation with these members of the Assembly, to popularise the demands they will make and mobilise public opinion in favour of so just a cause

A most important event planned for early next year, to my mind, is the Asiatic Conference, and I should like to see our organisation take an active interest in it Perhaps we could approach the organisers of the Conference, and ask if some representatives of women's organisations from the Asiatic Countries invited could be asked, so that we may have a deeper interest in the work of this Conference. From our contacts with International Women's Work we have gained experience about women's problems and women's demands This experience would enable us to take an intelligent interest in the Asiatic Conference The Asiatic Conference would give us a new kind of inspiration and introduce us to the possibilities of the work that can be done by men and women together in the interest of a nation It would also bring closer to us the cultural and spiritual life of our neighbours, for women have been considered to be the special custodians of these aspects of national life. We could learn much from the part women have played during the important war years,

and are playing today in the national reconstruction of their countries. It would be a great opportunity and I for one would be greatly stimulated as I have no doubt every one of our members would be. In view of the exciting and important time at which we have arrived it would be well to mobilise our forces, and taking advantage of the direction given by National Planning to reorganise our work on a more co-ordinated basis. So far we have been conscious of the many ills we have been suffering from both in the Social, Economic and Political spheres and we have attempted a little spade-work here and there. But we realise that we have not been able to touch the fringe of the colossal tasks that lie ahead. We are dissatisfied that our progress has not been more rapid and more far-reaching; that we have not been able to awaken women in every town of India; that we have not been able to reach out into every village of India. All we have achieved is the dispelling of the belief from the minds of our men that our Conferences are glorified tea parties. We have I think to a large extent persuaded them to drop their supercilious and indulgent attitude to us, and recognise our earnest effort in the cause of the country and even in cases to invite our co-operation in tackling the national problems with which we are faced. They are now convinced that the much desired progress of India cannot be achieved without the active participation of women, and we are now confident that more and more of the gigantic task of reconstruction will have to be shared by women in every sphere of life.

One of the most important subjects for our consideration I believe is the question of our children. We have framed a Charter of Women's Rights. It is equally urgent that we should try to safeguard the rights of children. If we desire to see progress within 25 years we must actively plan the lives of our children into whose hands the destiny of the nation can be given within this period with complete confidence. The lack of knowledge of the requirements of the child from the earliest stage—even the pre-natal stage—the necessary diet, discipline, hours of sleep and play, methods of awakening the child mind etc. is pathetic. In no country are children so much neglected, in spite of all the love bestowed on them, as in India. No attention is paid in the average Indian home to child psychology and child requirements. Any haphazard training in the earlier stages is considered good enough until the child goes to school and even then there is no co-relation between the home and the school thus nullifying a good deal of whatever more scientific training the child may have at school. A nation-wide propaganda should be undertaken within the homes before the State can take up the responsibility of providing the facilities for the full development of the child once it has outgrown the conditions the home can provide. I cannot emphasize too strongly the necessity for our Conference Branches to work for the fundamental rights of the child for it is only by the work of women that we can ever hope to change the outlook of the mother and the grand mother who are the most important and influential people in the child's early life, in the Indian Home.

After that, the State will provide for education, health, and training for life, and even in these spheres much improvement is indicated, and we would do well to study the whole subject with care and voice our opinions

Our Conference, the premier Women's Organisation in India, should take the fullest advantage of the general awakening around us. Expert Planning Committees have produced, and are producing, comprehensive schemes whereby in the shortest possible time the greatest good can be effected and the country raised from the status of a backward country to that of the more forward countries of the world. Planning for Health, Education and Social Security, undertaken by the provincial authorities will necessarily take time to be translated into practical work. The whole complicated machinery will have to be fitted to the requirements of our vast country. It will be the function of the authorities to produce the wealth, to organise the distribution, to guarantee a minimum living wages, and provide the amenities, essential to civilised human life, to overhaul the laws, and dispense justice for men and women. But while this gigantic task is being organised, our branches will have unique opportunities of helping the new Governments, and organising the work, we have been doing in a much more direct and constructive manner. We can deal with single problems in a much more flexible, more human way, by preparing the ground for the healthful changes to be introduced, which is by no means an easy task, when we are dealing with large masses of people who are illiterate, not always prepared to accept what is good for them.

For example, it will be a long time before Health Services can be organised including preventive and curative medicine, hospitalisation, nursing, housing, and organised physical development. We know that the inadequacy of these services has resulted in the frightening maternal and child mortality figures, the miserably short expectancy of life, the poor physique of the average man and woman, the incidence of epidemics and disease. The unprecedented increase in our population will have to be controlled, and private and official enterprise organised for the achievement of physical fitness. Our share will naturally be that of propaganda amongst people who, because of their ignorance and illiteracy, are still shackled by superstition and orthodoxy and who, more often than not, resist any progressive policy, that is likely to affect their unscientific and out-of-date customs. I lay great importance on dietetics, the popularising of correct food values—a subject that is hardly known or considered by our people. Conservatism in the use of foodstuffs, and in the methods of cooking, is common in every part of India, and unless women are taught the value and use of substitute foods for commodities they have always used, and which today are not procurable, the health of the people cannot improve. Housing is closely related to health and so is physical culture.

It is only after the preliminary conditions for health and housing of people are ensured, that attention can be paid to Education, as Education can only be absorbed by healthy human beings. Free Compulsory Primary Education is the sphere of the State, but the social worker can find scope for work in popularising



the State Service or supplementing it in various ways. Literacy classes, basic education and adult education cannot be organised on a nation wide scale for years. Lectures on interesting topics, thought provoking debates, songs and plays on topical subjects can be arranged by workers in the cause of Education

Again, the economic condition of our people can only be bettered by our Governments but our branches can help greatly with the formation of Cottage Industries, Industrial Homes and through formation of Women's Co-operative Societies and even by organising Women's Polytechnics.

The courses for such work are short and easy and can quickly be absorbed by intelligent women who would be able to do useful work. But apart from the help we can offer in the various nation building programmes I feel that the most important task before us is the work of social reform. In the social sphere it is difficult for authoritative Governments that function on a democratic basis to exert the influence that social workers can in their day-to-day work. For example one may by law remove the disabilities that are associated with a caste system, but no effective change can be brought about in a society in its social relations, where a caste-system has been recognised from time immemorial. Established social conventions in any country die hard and in our country where every custom has some religious or pseudo-religious bearing it is infinitely more difficult to give them up. Our endeavour should be to separate the temporal from the spiritual to purify society on the one hand to purify religion on the other—to sift out the basic truths and fundamental virtues from the mass of superstitions and orthodoxy that in our generation have no meaning at all. We cannot allow progress to be hampered by customs that are going to limit our activities in this new India. The narrow bases of our religious practices have to be widened and each religious festival interpreted in terms of national regeneration. Narrow religion should be confined to homes and places of worship and all public demonstrations and displays of religious beliefs banned.

In effect our demand for social security and health insurance, for education and vocational training will be the foundation on which the edifice of National Reconstruction will be based. I believe that the work of nation-building is of the utmost importance and can only be done effectively if the public is taken into confidence by the authorities, so that the people may be inspired to give the completest co-operation with faith in the capacity of the Government to implement their promise. The only way in which this work can be done is by creating a new portfolio to deal with social problems with a good proportion of women to administer the department and safeguard the interests of women and children.

We have for some years now felt more and more that our work should bind us with the villages where three-fourths of our population resides. So far

the main activities of our Conference have been centred in towns, and when we make the claim, that we speak for the women of India, we cannot really substantiate it, for we can only speak for that section of women, who have the advantages of modern progress, in so far as it is to be found in the cities of India. We realise, that problems great as they are in the cities, are even more complicated in our villages. If any work is to be undertaken in those areas, that work has to be planned on a much more comprehensive basis, for one aspect of life is so closely linked up with another, that unless planning on a large scale is undertaken no effective work can be done. I would like to give you a small example from our experiences in the Bombay Presidency with the Village Health Work, we are attempting to do. While our purpose, primarily, is to give medicines to the sick and diseased, we realise that the preventive side of medicine is extremely important, and one cannot effectively deal with diseases arising from malnutrition without taking into consideration the economic possibilities of the villagers to improve their diet and make it more wholesome. We talk glibly about cleanliness and the elementary advantage of the use of clean water, but where there is a constant scarcity of water and the village women have to walk two to three miles to get one pot of water and that after a whole day's work on the fields, we fail to realise how difficult even the use of water can be. We advocate the necessity of milk for children, but in areas where there are no cattle, it is nothing but mockery to the villager to insist on a commodity that he cannot procure. Again, we suggest cottage industries for bettering of their economic condition, but where the raw material for such industries is not available and where there is no market for the finished product even if such raw material is procured, how is it possible for the villager to understand the value of developing cottage industries? These examples can be multiplied a hundred-fold to bring home to us the necessity of undertaking village reconstruction in a more comprehensive manner than we have ever visualised.

In my opinion, the next few years will be a testing time for our branches, and my advice as President of the A I W.C. is that each branch should plan intelligently for the area it can reach. Let each branch for the next year take up one practical piece of work and concentrate on it, devote money, time, energy, thought and experimentation to it, so that it might evolve as a pilot scheme to be multiplied a thousand-fold by the authorities when Governments, Municipalities or Local Boards have recognised its value. I have already given some indication of the type of work that can be undertaken. These schemes may be creches, village social and health centres, housing, women's industrial co-operatives, model kitchens with an emphasis on dietetics, industrial schools, etc., etc. Our weakness, to my mind, has been that we ambitiously undertake too much and diffuse our limited resources into too many channels, with the result that in no sphere are we able to claim that we have made a definite contribution. For example, at the beginning of each year our branches appoint a dozen or so sub-committees on topics like Health, Education,

Economics, Labour Legislation, Civil Liberties, Social Disabilities etc etc.—Sub-Committees that meet once a month and vaguely discuss each topic. With the small number of workers we can enlist and our limited financial resources this does not seem to me to be good enough. I would rather our branches concentrated all their strength on one scheme and appointed individual members to report to their Committees the developments on the above topics from time to time for joint action.

I would like to see a closer connection between the Branches and the Central Office and that can be established by the submission of a quarterly report of the specialised work undertaken by each branch and a free discussion of local problems with the Central Office for a solution to be arrived at on a wider basis with the guidance of the Centre.

I would also like to suggest the centralisation of the Village Medical Health Scheme, which was inaugurated with the generous help of the Skippo Fund London, six months ago and as it has developed under the guidance of the Bombay Branch. We are assured of a second and perhaps a third Health Van in time. It would be desirable to evolve a common policy for the working of each van, and direct the work from the Centre as the Branches may not be in a position to raise the necessary funds to get the full benefit of the scheme. However this suggestion will be open to detailed discussion before any decision can be taken.

I would also now like to suggest that we begin to think of organising a corps of scientifically trained workers whom we can utilise in all distressful emergencies such as famine and epidemics, floods etc. for the purpose of helping with relief and rehabilitation work. During the last 6 years we have watched the distress caused by the Bijapur Famine, the Bengal Famine, the Bombay Explosion, the Malbar and Orissa Famine, and in recent months the misery due to the riot situation in several provinces. As an All-India Women's Organisation we have shared in the relief work on each occasion, but have done it only by contributing financially to the call from each distressed area. I should like to see an A.I.W.C. social and medical unit fully trained and equipped ready for any emergency in any part of India. Work of this nature calls for a missionary spirit, courage, and a sense of public responsibility. Great service has been rendered through the ages by religious missions of various denominations. It is my ambition to be able to find people, who would be inspired by the greatest religion of all—the Love of Humanity—who would be prepared to face hardship to help the distressed to cure the suffering and rehabilitate the homeless. Of course, we could not hope to organise such a unit unless we could find the money to maintain the personnel, for even such women, who are willing to dedicate themselves to the service of humanity must live.

Another cause for which we should endeavour to provide an adequate fund is the Representation of Indian Women at International Conferences. I am convinced, that contacts made abroad will be valuable to us in our struggle for progress, and it is, therefore, necessary for us to send a strong contingent of Indian women to Conferences abroad. How often does it happen that the best women for such work are not able to avail themselves of the opportunities offered, because they cannot afford the expensive journeys, and we as an organisation cannot provide for financial help to such representatives. India has a contribution to make to the world and Indian women have the strength and ability to put the case of their country in any Assembly. In an official capacity, we have seen that Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, the only woman leader of a National Delegation at U.N.O., has acquitted herself most creditably, and we are proud of the fact. We also recognise the good work done by Rai Kumari Amrit Kaur at the U.N.E.S.C.O. We are equally confident that our representatives at unofficial conferences would be able to distinguish themselves, provided we are able to choose them wisely, irrespective of the fact that they can or cannot afford the financial commitments.

We are fortunate in that the A.I.W.C. claims amongst its ardent adherents a large proportion of young women. The times, we live in, call for enterprise, experiment, and hard work, and who is better fitted for undertaking arduous tasks with courage and self-sacrifice than the younger generation? Their minds are better equipped, their vision is clearer, their enthusiasm is more productive, and they are less shackled by conventions. They are very conscious of the responsibilities they owe to our country and our people, and their earnestness in the work they undertake has been a very heartening experience for those of us of the older generation, who may not live to see the fulfilment of our dreams of a happy, prosperous, and progressive nation. There is an old adage that says, "It is better to travel hopefully than to arrive." We certainly are fortunate, for we have every reason to travel hopefully. Our satisfaction is none the less in the knowledge that we are privileged to contribute our mite to the regeneration of this great land of ours."

*The President* then announced with pleasure the presence of Her Highness the Princess of Berar at the Conference and requested her to say a few words.

*H. H. Princess Durru Shehvar of Berar*, speaking in Urdu, wished the deliberations every success.\*

*Shrimati Ammu Swaminathan*, Member of the Constituent Assembly of India, then said :

"It is with great joy and pride that I stand here and see this very large gathering of women, not only from C. P. and Berar, but from all over India."

\* H. H. Princess Durru Shehvar's speech at a public meeting at Akola, held on the 29th December, 1946, and over which she presided, forms an Appendix to this Report.

It is also with great pride that we welcome Shrimati Dhanvanti Rama Rau our President for this year. More than our congratulating her on her election as the President of the A.I.W.O. I feel that we must congratulate ourselves in having her as the President of this Conference. She has for the last so many years been doing such good work for the welfare of the people of India. I am glad that her work has not been confined only to the women and children of India because the work we are doing should be done in terms of the people of India, and not only in terms of the women and children of the country.

It is a good sign for us to see so many women around us to day, and to know that we are no longer sitting at home or behind the purdah but have assembled to devise ways of doing active work. Today we stand in very difficult and critical period in the political history of India. We have to take the full share and responsibility not only in the attainment of freedom, but also in preparing ourselves for being worthy of it. To bring security and prosperity must be our aim.

So many people have said that we are content merely with passing of resolutions. I entirely disagree with them. I have been a member of this Association from its very start. When people criticise us, they conveniently forget that but for our activities during the last 19 years, the women of India would not have occupied the position they are enjoying today. Having achieved this progress, we must continue vigorously with our work and thus give a lead and guidance to the younger generations on whose shoulders the future rests. I extend my greetings to you all and particularly to our friends who have come here for this Conference from abroad and who I hope, will enjoy their visit to this country."

*Lady Rama Rau* then introduced *Mrs. Grace Lankester* Liaison Officer between the A.I.W.O. and a Group of British Women's Societies, and said that *Mrs. Lankester* had always taken a great interest in India and Indian affairs and worked with enthusiasm for the Indian women's cause in England.

*Mrs. Grace Lankester* said "I have brought a message for this Conference from the Liaison Group in Great Britain which works in co-operation with your Organisation. I also bring messages from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (an organisation representing many countries), the British Section of the Women's International League, and from the Women's Council on Indian Affairs to which sixteen prominent women's organisations in England are affiliated.

I am delighted to be at another Annual Session, to renew friendships and make new friends. The last Session I attended was in 1937 at Nagpur. Since then both our countries have passed through great sufferings in different ways years of testing and trial, which have left their mark. I see evidence

of great advance made by the A.I.W.C., an instance of which is this great gathering this afternoon. I will take back with me vivid impressions of this Conference.

It is also a great joy that this year my daughter, Dorothea Lankester, has come with me as a second representative from the Liaison Group.

The work of the A.I.W.C. is followed with great interest by our women's Groups in England and they are proud of the part Indian women are now playing in international affairs. I feel that we are living in a very sick world today and the germs of hate and distrust are still spreading. We women everywhere must act as nurses and physicians to heal this sickness and prevent its infection. Armies of such workers are needed in every country, meeting hatred and suspicion with understanding and friendship.

Your difficulties are known, the frustrations under which you have suffered for so long are understood, but the women in England in peace-groups, look to the women in India to keep their faith in non-violent methods in their dealings with my country and with their internal difficulties. Internationally, if we put up the moral fight together against war and oppression and for human rights everywhere with the strength of our spiritual convictions, we shall work as sisters to bring about a better and healthier world.

In conclusion, may I assure the Conference that the women of Great Britain are one with the women of India in their fight for their just rights. They are also very proud of the awakening among Indian women as exemplified by Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Mrs Hansa Mehta, and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, who have represented Indian women at International Conferences."

*The President*, in introducing Mrs. Hilda Seligman as the next speaker, dwelt upon the new work which had been undertaken by the A.I.W.C. through the generosity and efforts of Mrs. Seligman. She had founded the Skippo Fund in London by donating all the royalties out of the sale of her story book for children ("Skippo") and had been able to send the first Ashoka-Akbar Mobile Health Van to India for bringing medical aid to remote villages. The President specially emphasised the fact that this humanitarian piece of work had been undertaken by Mrs. Seligman and all her helpers for a distant country at a time when their own homes and cities were being bombed in the course of a total war. She conveyed to Mrs. Seligman and the other organisers and donors of the Skippo Fund the deep appreciation and thanks of the Women's Conference for their substantial gesture of good will which, she was sure, would have far-reaching beneficial results. She then invited Mrs. Seligman to address the Conference.

*Mrs Hilda Seligman* said. "I am sure that Ashoka and Akbar are here in spirit today and listen with joy to the report of our Ashoka-Akbar Health Van,

which through Lady Rama Rau's devotion and genius for organisation is within six months of its arrival in Bombay, treating a large number of patients every day in some of the isolated villages in the Presidency. You wonder why our Fund is called Skipko Fund. Well when we received the encouraging message from Shrimati Kamaladevi saying that the A.I.W.C. was prepared to maintain and operate such a Van I had to think of how to raise the money necessary for building and equipping it with all the best that money could buy. So in order to start the Fund I used some money raised by the sale of my little story book for children about a goat (common to East and West) who never took "No" for an answer and overcame all obstacles. This seemed symbolic of the workers of the A.I.W.C. who were ready to take charge of the Van.

The supporters of the Skipko Fund in England send you their good wishes and will I know be amazed to hear all I shall have to tell them on my return. We gave you a Van filled with all the up-to-date ideas we could find but the workers of the A.I.W.C. have given it a soul and beyond that, also very practical and untiring hands and feet to work for the welfare of all, in the spirit of your great leaders—Ashoka and Akbar.

The President then called upon Lady Pares a well known worker of many years standing in the women's movement in England and who had come to Akola as the representative of the International Alliance of Women to address the gathering.

Lady Pares said "The International Alliance of Women sends warmest greetings and good wishes to this wonderful Conference the most remarkable Assembly of Women that I myself have ever seen. There has never been anything like it in my own country since the days when we were clamouring for the vote. I also bring personal messages from Mrs. Corbett Ashby our Honorary President and from Dr. Hanna Rydh the new President of the Alliance who was present at your Conference last year. I was present at a gathering in 1934 which met to wish Godspeed to Mrs. Corbett Ashby and Dr. Maud Royden the first women to fly from England to attend the All India Women's Conference. In those days, it seemed a great adventure and attracted much public interest.

The International Alliance of Women was founded in 1902 by an American Miss Carrie Chapman who felt that national societies were not enough. At one time, 46 different countries were affiliated to it and at a conference held in Berlin there were 1 000 delegates. The Congresses are held every three years. This year we met at Interlaken. 21 countries were represented. Two representatives attended from the A.I.W.C. Miss Konda Parvatidevi and the Maharani of Vizianagaram. The Alliance is very proud that Mrs. Hansa Mehta has consented to be a Vice-President of the Alliance. I recall with affection that Lady Rama Rau was for many years a member of the Board.

Since your last Conference your country has taken a great step forward to self-government. We wish you well and hope that the women of India will have their great part to play in India's future, remembering the motto of the Alliance. Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities."

*The President*, in introducing Miss Mary Sweeney as the next speaker, said that for 20 years she had been working in America for the cause of which we were working here. She had made a special study of child psychology and they had an institute in America where children's problems were scientifically studied and methods devised for tackling them. Miss Sweeney had come to India for one year and was anxious that the work that they were doing in America should also be started in India.

*Miss Mary Sweeney* said "There are thousands and thousands of women in the United States, who wish that they might have the great honour and privilege that I have today to be present at this historic moment in the life of the All India Women's Conference, when many of the things you have worked for and dreamed of come into being as realities. No group of women in any country have been watched with such sincere sympathy and admiration by the women of the United States as the All India Women's Conference. You have their profoundest respect for all you have accomplished, for your courage in pushing reforms, and for your vision for the future.

If I interpret aright the feeling and the thinking of the women of the United States, they believe that India is the bridge between the East and the West. India is the great gateway through which mutual thinking and understanding will pass. Your service to world understanding and world peace is of the deepest significance. For the women of the world have in their keeping the most precious heritage of civilisation, the children and the homes of the world.

Who is there to say, that if the women of the world will mobilise their spiritual strength, their moral force, and their intellectual power, that we cannot stand on the threshold of a new world, key in hand, waiting to open the gates of plenty to all mankind."

*The President* then called upon Miss Lucke, representing the Young Women's Christian Association of America, to say a few words.

*Miss Lucke* said "The All-India Women's Conference is being watched by the women of our Western World with admiration. I bring greetings from thousands of women in the United States, from twelve of our American Schools of Social Work, and from the members of the Young Women's Christian Association, who have known your movement from its inception, and have followed with pride your courageous work for unity of action for social and legislative reform. I am also authorised to offer co-operation from our



Government departments of social service. Particularly, the Children's Bureau and the Women's Bureau of our Department of Labour in which I received my own first experience in social work stand ready to help in any way you request. There is greeting also from the American Federation of International Institutes which has done pioneer work in planning and training for social service despite the difficulties of as many as thirty languages spoken in one city much illiteracy and very little interest in learning a common language. It will send India all it has learned in thirty years of experimentation.

We in such institutions watch your movement closely as one of the greatest women's movements of the world. We shall be proud to work with you. We have admired your leaders who have been our guests. We have especially admired your Mrs. Pandit when she came as a private citizen as well as, this winter in her position of leadership in the United Nations Organisation. We were proud of the contribution of India when your Mrs. Hansa Mehta represented you and her own deep convictions at the U N Committee on the Status of Women. We have known and loved your Lady Rama Rau as the Mother in a charming book written by her daughter while in an American College. No book on Modern India has been more widely read and keenly appreciated in our country except Mr. Nehru's. There is a genuine eagerness in the United States to know India better. We wish to move in co-operation with you to create a better world.

*Mrs. Nathan J. Lam*, Sheriff of Bombay—the first woman Sheriff of an Indian city—then greeted the Conference and the President with a few words, and also conveyed the greetings of the Bombay Presidency Council.

*Lady Ram Rau* then introduced Sir Moropant Joshi as a distinguished resident of Amraoti and a great social worker in the cause of women.

*Sir Moropant Joshi* said: "When I received the letter of invitation from the Secretary of the A I W O I wondered what message could a man of 85 years of age give. But I then thought that the best thing I could do was to give my blessings and wish every success to the Indian women's movement."

A great awakening has taken place among Indian women; they have become conscious of their inherent rights. Let me, however sound a note of caution. It is essential that efforts should be made to improve the lot of all classes of women in the society particularly the poorer classes who dwell in countless villages of India.

I am glad that you have prepared a Charter of Rights of Women. The signs of progress and awakening are clearly noticeable among the people of this country and the work of the A. I. W. O. for the last 20 years has yielded good fruit. I am an optimist and I have every hope that whatever decisions are arrived at in this Conference will be the best for the advancement of the women of India."

*Masuma Begum Hosain Ali Khan* then proposed a vote of thanks, in Urdu, to the Chair, II II the Princess of Berar, the distinguished guests and members present, the Reception Committee, the Volunteers, and all those who helped to make the Conference a success

*Mrs. Taraben Ranadive*, Branch Representative, Berar, seconded the vote of thanks

The Session then adjourned till 9 A.M. next day,

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND DAY-SUNDAY, 29th DEC. 1946.

9 A.M. to 1 P.M. and 2-30 to 5-30 P.M.

*The President, Lady Rama Rau*, announced that three sub-committees had been formed, viz.,

- (1) *Publicity*, consisting of Mrs. Shiva Rao, Mrs. Mithan Lam, Mrs. Renu Chakravarty, and Mrs. Anusayabai Kale;
- (2) *Scrutineers for Nomination and Voting Papers*, consisting of Mrs. Raksha Saran, Mrs. Shantabai Kashalkar, Shrimati Pushpavati Mehta and Mrs. Taraba Ranadive;
- (3) *Tellers*, consisting of Miss Tara Hosangadi, Miss Shantabai Daundkar, Dr. Phularenu Guha, and Mrs. Ayeshamma Balakrishnan

*Dr. Mahimabai Sukthankar*, Hon. Treasurer and Actg. Hon. General Secretary, *pro tem*, then took the roll of delegates present

## RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions, expressing condolences were moved *from the Chair* and carried unanimously, all standing for one minute —

### 1. CONDOLENCES

- (a) This meeting of the All-India Women's Conference expresses deep regret at the loss of Mrs. Gulbanu Doctor, one of the Vice-Presidents of the A I W C, and a much-loved social worker of Bombay. It offers heart-felt condolences to Mr. Doctor and the other members of his family
- (b) This meeting of the A I W C deeply regrets the passing away of three great sons of India,
  - (1) Bhulabhai Desai,
  - (2) Rt. Hon'ble Shrinivas Shastri,
  - (3) Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya,

at a time when their services to the mother-land would have been of great importance. It offers sincere sympathy to the members of their respective families

## 2 CONGRATULATIONS

The following resolutions were then moved *from the Chair* and carried unanimously amidst cheers —

- (a) This meeting of the A I W C is proud of the fact that a woman was appointed leader of a National Delegation to the U N O. It congratulates the Indian Delegation and particularly Mrs. Vijaya lakshmi Pandit, on their able advocacy of India's case in South Africa which led to a great victory. It further thanks all the nations who supported India's just cause.
- (b) This Conference congratulates Mrs. Hansa Mehta on her valuable work on the Commission of the Status of Women at U N O last May.
- (c) This Conference deeply appreciates the good work done by Raj kumari Amrit Kaur as a member of the Indian Delegation to the United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organisation.
- (d) This Conference congratulates Mrs. Mithan Lam on being the first woman chosen as the Sheriff of Bombay. It wishes her a useful and constructive year of service.

*The President* then asked the Sectional Heads, Members in Charge of Subjects, Editors of Roshni, Secretaries to the A I W C Fund Association and Save the Children Committee, and the Liaison Officer in England to present their reports of 1946. The following reports were presented —

### ROSHNI (Hindustani)

**Mrs. Hajrah Begum** Editor

The decision to print Roshni as a monthly journal in Hindi and Urdu was taken at the Hyderabad Session of the Standing Committee but the preliminary arrangements took a few months. It was only from May 1946 that we could print Roshni regularly.

In these eight months we have brought out seven issues of Roshni and the Special Conference Number is now before the members. We began with out any separate list for Hindustani subscribers and today we have about 400 regular subscribers for the Hindi and about 100 for the Urdu. In the beginning we started with printing 500 copies of Hindi and 200 copies of Urdu but in five months we found that even 1000 copies of Hindi did not suffice and we had to apply for doubling our paper quota, so that we might print 2,000 copies of Hindi in future.

The Editorial Committee consists of the following : Rajkumari Amrit, Kaur, Lady Rama Rau, Mrs Sayani, Mrs Rameshwari Nehru, Mrs Pandit and Begum Hussain Ali Khan. It was with their valuable advice and help that Roshni could be improved from month to month.

We tried to make Roshni a means of educating those of our members who could not take advantage of English publications and for the purpose we had as regular feature articles on Diet, Mothercraft, Legal Status of Women, Women in Industry, etc. Secondly, we tried to encourage our various branches to become more active by giving them news of good work, being done by the A.I.W.C. and other organisations, and news of women's movements in the various parts of world.

Thirdly, we encouraged our readers to discuss the problems of their daily life and we recieved very encouraging response in the form of letters or articles about the problems of second marriage, divorce, housing, retioning, and other such difficulties of the average housewife.

Lastly, we attempted to enthuse our members by relating to them stories of women fighting for their rights.

At the request of our readers, we also included stories and simple poems in our recent numbers. It has also been our attempt to make the journal as attractive and in every issue we have given numerous sketches, illustrations, etc. That our attempt has been appreciated can be seen from the rapidly increasing demand for our magazine not only from our branch members, but from places in Rajputana, Assam, South Africa, etc. Some of the well-known papers such as Hamari Zaban paper of the Anjuman Taraqqi—Urdu—and Jan-Yug etc. also gave us good write-ups and helped to popularise the paper.

We encouraged criticism from our readers and it was most heartening to see that our readers do take the paper as their own, and freely and frankly criticise it.

The main criticism which, to a large extent is justified, has been about language, but there are many reasons for our failing to improve the language. The main reason is that our contributors, with the exception of Mrs. Rameshwari Nehru, do not send their articles in Hindustani. As a result, every article has to be translated and loses the literary style which every individual writer generally has. Secondly, the translators have had to be either men, who do not know much about women's movement, or girls whose mothertongue is Gujrathi or Marathi. Lastly, the composing and printing is done by Marathi knowing workers, which makes the job of proof-correcting still more difficult. I think this difficulty can be removed next year.

The Standing Committee sanctioned a sum of Rs 1,000 for the year for Roshni. We have spent in all about Rs 3,860 for our issues upto December

and the Conference Number will cost us another Rs. 2,000. Of this amount, we have recovered roughly Rs. 1,900 through sales of Roshni and subscribers' fees and have secured another Rs. 1,600 worth of advertisements. Thus the AIWU will not have spent much more than Rs. 1,000 sanctioned by the Committee. The amount spent on the Conference Number is expected to be met by sale of the Number which is priced at Re. 1 per copy and from advertisements which should get us another five hundred rupees.

I should like to thank all branches which gave me such splendid help and co-operation to popularise Roshni and many of our members without whose active help Roshni could not have been produced.

### ROSHNI (English)

Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, Editor

The Standing Committee meeting at Hyderabad (Sind) in January 1946 decided to convert the journal into a monthly publication and I was asked to publish it from Lucknow. The distribution was done by the Central Office Bombay. This division of labour was not satisfactory for various reasons and from July onwards the editing, printing and distribution of the journal was done from Lucknow by the Editor.

*Finance.*—The cost of publishing one number approximates to Rs. 300; it varies according to the number of pages we have. So far we have published 10 Numbers, the November–December Number being a combined one. The total cost for the year is about Rs. 3,000. We have permission to print 800 copies and even if everyone of the copies is sold there will still be a deficit of Rs. 600 to be provided. But facts are different.

Notwithstanding the decision of the Standing Committee that each Branch should at least find subscribers for five copies, no large-scale attempt has been made to increase the number of subscribers. Today we distribute 580 copies. Of these 260 Indian subscribers and 10 foreigners have paid their subscriptions. Another 150 are re-saleable, which brings the total to 410. From November we have been sending out 25 copies to foreign countries for purposes of exchange and 30 copies inside the country. (All the Bombay Ministers are given complimentary copies.)

*Advertisements.*—Altogether we have published 5½ pages advertisements. The prospects for next year are brighter. (I have already booked 12 pages for Ponds Creams and Extracts and some pages for Tatass—more will be coming in.) The Government of India has put us on the list of recognised papers and we are likely to get their advertisements in future. I am also in communication with many others and I am sure to get good response.

In the mean time the Committee should consider the following suggestions:  
(1) The get up of the journal is anything but satisfactory. This is due to

the absence of printing facilities in Lucknow. There is no likelihood of the situation improving for another 2 or 3 years.

(2) The editing, distribution, and managerial work is too much for one single individual. There must be a co-ordinating organisation for the literary, publicising, and advertising work of the *Roshni*, both English and Hindustani. At present, the two editors work out their plans from different centres without any kind of help, guidance or co-operation from each other or from the members of the Conference.

(3) Every member should feel free to criticise the production, contents, management of the journal, and also regard herself morally responsible for sustaining its value as the official organ of the Conference.

There is need for a women's journal to explain to the public and women themselves, their status, their problems, and the country's problems. There is no point in forcing the journal on people, who give Rs 3, as a sort of annual charity. I think, therefore, that we should keep the subscription low and explore other methods of financing the venture and improving it.

*The Annual Number* is before the Conference. The cost of production for 3,000 copies is about Rs. 3,000, and we have printed 3,000 copies.

I have not tried to improve the contents as, although I took up the responsibility of the task for getting out the numbers and their distribution, the vast amount of correspondence leave me hardly any time to attend to the quality of the journal. I shall be very grateful, if the Committee will appoint some other person, living in Bombay or Delhi or Calcutta to carry on the work.

## THE ALL INDIA WOMEN'S EDUCATION FUND ASSOCIATION

Mrs Sewa Singh Gill, Hon. Secretary

The Association has continued to sponsor the development of the Lady Irwin College and has, in recent months, also considered the launching of a scheme for the training of welfare workers for rural and urban areas. Mrs Rustonji has been its main inspiration. For this latter scheme, a special fund is necessary and a Committee has been appointed to deal with this problem.

*Lady Irwin College*—The progress of the Lady Irwin College has been maintained at its usual standard. Last year, a variety of grains, as substitutes for rice and wheat, were tried out in order to popularise unfamiliar cereals in different provinces. With the kind help of Dr Orkney, recipes were collected from all over India and these were worked out and improved upon by the Cookery Department. We hope that the recipes, which were in their final form handed over to the Food Department, did succeed in making the new grains popular!

This year Miss Deulkar has been experimenting on the use of yeast from the samples provided by Dr Mitra of the Food Department. She has succeeded in building up and preparing a number of dishes some of which will be on exhibit in the Cookery Section. Inclusion of yeast in the poor man's diet will make a marked improvement in the quality as it is a source of vitamin B as well as proteins. Miss Deulkar has been sending recipes of dishes, with and without yeast, to the Nutrition Section of the Food Department from time to time. Lectures on Nutrition and Balanced Diets are being arranged for the Delhi Women's League which is anxious to educate women of the Mohallas on wise spending on food. It is hoped that these lectures will prove useful. 'The fruit preservation class was held twice during the year as in previous years.'

'Two extension courses in Cookery were held one in Indian and the other in French Cookery. The attendance in both these classes showed that they were equally popular among the internal and external students.'

The report of the Teachers Training Department records:—"The Teachers' Training Class organised an Exhibition in February 1945, on, Planning of Model Lessons. The lessons exhibited were on Dietetics, Cookery, Housewifery, Laundry, Hygiene and Mothercraft."

The aim of the Exhibition was to show how teaching can be made interesting by the use of charts and models. Lesson notes, which explained the correct use of charts and models and the treatment of the subject matter were displayed at each section. The Exhibition was the first of its kind and it proved to be a valuable project in rousing the enthusiasm of the students. They showed originality in making the charts and planning the models."

Reports of other old students particularly of those who have secured the Teachers Training Diploma in Home Science have also come to hand. Of the 156 fully trained graduates, over 100 have been employed in various capacities.

Miss Bhan, Deputy Directress of Public Instruction, Punjab wrote "A few ladies trained in your College are working in our schools as assistant mistresses or assistant inspectresses of schools for Domestic Science. They have greatly improved the standard of Cookery, Laundry and Needlework. ... I wish it were possible to get more Domestic Science trained mistresses from your College."

Six of the old students are on the Teaching Staff of the Lady Irwin College and they have discharged their many duties with loyalty, devotion, and efficiency.

The literary and artistic talents of the students have been given a new scope for expression. In the past the Union Journal, Jagrati and the Literary and Debating Society provided the main outlets. To these, have been added

the class, Wall-Newspapers, prepared in three languages, Hindi, Urdu, and English. In the report relating to this aspect of the students' interests, it has been claimed that the Wall-Newspaper has introduced a healthy spirit of competition and has raised the general standard and originality of the contributed articles and the artistic sketches.

In regard to the Co-operative Society, the year's out-turn has been over Rs 3,000. The Secretary, the treasurer, and the Post Mistress have been very keen on making a success of their job. The Society is doing good work.

Interest in village economic and social work formed the main concern of the students of the Teachers' Training Class. The week spent at Najafgarh and the surrounding villages, with an intensive course of lectures on rural life and conditions, greatly increased their potentialities for service in the country areas. Their Social Service League also has functioned as an active and enthusiastic body. Spinning was added to the educational programme drawn up for the College servants and their families. Distribution of cloth, medical aid, and sick nursing were other useful aspects of their work.

In conclusion, I would like to say a word about the negotiations that are now taking place between the authorities of the College and the Government of India. It is proposed that a new Degree Course in Home Science be instituted, of which the Government would bear the major cost. Plans and estimates of the new buildings are in the course of preparation and a special committee is dealing with the academic and other aspects of this proposal. If everything develops according to plan, the Degree Course might come into operation within a year from now.

## INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES

Mrs. Jayashri Raiji

It is now an acknowledged fact, that the best method for the future development of Industries in India, and for giving economic help to the poor people, is the revival and encouragement of our indigenous industries, on co-operative basis. How women can help the formation and development of Industrial Co-operatives, was explained by me in my first circular.

I have also emphasized the necessity of training women organisers of Co-operative Societies, and had circulated a Scheme for this. A few days back, the Bombay Government had called a conference of those taking interest in Industrial Co-operative Societies. The All-India Women's Conference had received an invitation, and I had attended the conference. A resolution of giving suitable help to destitute women was passed and it was decided that any one of the following handicrafts should be taught to women, and industrial co-operative societies should be formed of these skilled women.

The crafts are Spinning, Weaving, Tailoring, Knitting, Embroidery Work, Basket Making, Coir Making, Leather Work, Fruit Canning, Paper Making,



Preparing Mashala, Papad, Achar, and other eatables Painting, Drawing Making Designs Printing and Calico Work, Button Making Toy Making etc

For organisation work, the Government has decided to conduct training classes for women organisers. I congratulate the Bombay Government for taking up this work and hope others will follow this example. The various Branches of the All India Women's Conference should ask their Governments to take up this work. If the Government will bear some cost for the training of Women Organisers, the cost for training will be definitely reduced. It would be possible to conduct a training class in Bombay in the Summer Vacation say from the 15th of April to the end of May. I request the members to approach their Governments, and to let me know the reply they receive as early as possible. Unless a certain number comes forward for the training it is not possible to run the class.

I am glad to recommend the excellent work done by the Baroda Branch in forming Consumers and Producers Co-operative Societies of poor and lower middle class women in Baroda. The Branch is running a co-operative cheap grain shop the shareholders of which are women from amongst Harijan Vaghari, and Potters class. The Branch has now started selling eatables like Papad Sweets Mashala, Cheevda, etc prepared by poor women.

The Bombay Branch was instrumental in organising a co-operative society of Mang women, broom makers.

The Broach women successfully conducted a cheap grain shop on co-operative lines.

Poona has also a store run by the Poona Mahila Mandal which helps to sell eatables and other articles prepared by poor women.

### SKIPPO FUND MOBILE HEALTH VAN

Dr Mallalbal Sukthankar Member in-Charge

On the 16th May 1946 the Ashoka-Akbar Health Van was formally welcomed by the All-India Women's Conference, at the Reception arranged at the Surderabai Hall in Bombay under the Presidentship of Shri B G Kher Prime Minister. This Van has been presented by the Skippo Fund in London, which was specially founded by Mrs. Hilda Seligman for the purpose of bringing medical relief and promoting health education in isolated villages in India. This is the first Van to be sent out by the Fund on the undertaking that the Conference shall maintain and operate it, so as to get the fullest benefit from it.

The Van which was immediately handed over to the Bombay Branch for a year's work, was put into a group of villages around Sanjan, Thana District, about 85 miles away from Bombay, where there are aboriginal tribes or adivasis, whose condition has been utterly neglected in every way. Not only are there no medical or educational services for them, but even food, shelter, and clothing are barely available, and they are more or less isolated from modern amenities of life.

The Van is stationed in Khattalwad village. A doctor, nurse, chauffeur, and cleaner are attached to it for full time duty. In the morning, the villagers come to the Van for treatment and in the afternoon the Van goes out according to a planned programme to certain villages. So far, a circuit of five villages has been taken up. In the beginning, the villagers were invited to come and see the Van, and medicines were distributed to them. Now that it has become well-known and popular, an average of 35 people visit it daily and altogether about 5,000 people have taken advantage of it.

The average monthly expenses incurred by the Bombay Branch including salaries, medicines and maintenance costs of the Van, amount to Rs 1,000. Lady Rama Rau, Chairman of the Bombay Branch, has been able to get an anonymous donor to bear this cost for a year, and in all other ways has taken a keen personal interest in carrying through this work. The Bombay Branch has formed a Village Mobile Van Committee, whose members pay regular visits of inspection every month. They are now making plans for expanding the work by building a permanent hospital and clinic nearby.

The work that has been carried out by the Bombay Branch in this new and unexplored field of practical social service, has been of a pioneer nature. They are to be heartily congratulated on the splendid progress they have made within seven months and the interest they have been successful in arousing for this type of service.

As previously decided, the Van will revert to the centre next May, for being handed over to any other Branch which may apply for it. There is no doubt that the work which can be accomplished through such a mobile Unit, can attain a tremendous importance, especially if co-ordinated and linked up with medical facilities already in existence. Also the interest and assistance of the local authorities, residents and, workers, when roused, should prove to be of immense value both materially and psychologically.

There is one other aspect of this service, which is of great importance, viz., the preventive and educative side of health. Special stress will have to be laid on ante-natal and post-natal work. Obviously, propaganda through exhibitions, Cinema slides, demonstrations, etc., will be a powerful factor. Health visitors must be there to visit and promote this work. *Dais* in the villages should also be given some training. In fact, we must try to make the village

a self supporting unit while the Van is there to help. Then again in any emergency medical help should become available through such mobile units to anybody who seeks it in an emergency, and not only to those who cannot have any other aid. A plan drafted on these lines has been prepared and will be available for any branch starting the work of Mobile Health Vans.

### CULTURAL SECTION

**Mrs. Kamala S. Dongerkery, Member in-Charge**

At the outset mention must be made of the series on Indian Embroidery, contemplated in year 1945 and the first booklet on Kasuti of Karnatak which was scheduled to be out by December 1945. It was unfortunate that the Aundh Publishing Trust which had undertaken the work took so long over it. We were informed in June 1946 that on account of the coloured illustrations the printing was difficult and they would be able to tell us whether they could do it successfully or not only in the beginning of August. Late in the year the contract with the Aundh Publishing Trust was terminated and the publication work has now been taken over by Thackers Ltd. and it is hoped that before the end of the year the book will be out.

Several fields of work including Juvenile Literature had been suggested in last year's report. Mrs. Hansi Mehta, our President advised that as Juvenile Literature was an important field of work which had been sadly neglected we should concentrate our attention on this subject to make it a potential factor in nation-building activity, and that this should form the main work of the Cultural Section. Therefore work was started on this subject.

A questionnaire was drawn up and circulated to library association in the different provinces, and to persons interested in this work to review the existing position in order that it may serve as a basis for future work. Persons who could write with authority were requested to write articles to be included in a symposium entitled "Survey of Juvenile Literature in India." It has been possible to bring out a neat little book—Part one of Juvenile Literature in India.

It deals with the following languages

- |   |         |                             |
|---|---------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Marathi | by Mrs. Kamalabai Tilak     |
| 2 | Urdu    | Mrs. Asaf Fyzee             |
| 3 | Tamil   | Srimati Rangarayaki Thattai |
| 4 | Kannada | Prof V. Sitaramaiah         |
| 5 | Punjabi | Prof Jagdish Singh          |

Our sincere thanks are due to these writers who have so ably put forward the cause of children.

This gives a comprehensive idea of the position of Juvenile Literature at the moment, deals with its historical aspect and also points to the deficiencies and has several suggestions to offer. It is hoped that the suggestions made therein with regard to an All-India Publishing House, a Central Bureau for Research in children's literature and a subsidy from the Central Government towards this work will soon materialize. The remaining important languages will be dealt with in Part II which will soon be published.

Work on Indian Embroideries is proceeding, and material has been collected on Kashmir and Cutch embroidery with the help of Mrs. Rameshwari Nehru, and Prof. S. N. Dhar through the A I S A (Kashmir Branch) and Mrs. S. M. Kaikini (Cutch), to whom I am grateful.

As decided at the Standing Committee meeting in July, 1946, at Calcutta that this section should organise an entertainment to augment the funds of the Central Office, a show, "Deewar" was organised in November, 1946, which realised Rs. 1,686-0-0 by way of donation, Rs. 1,548-2-0 from sale of tickets and Rs. 118-11-0 from Zholi collection, made by Mr. Prithviraj Kapoor during the show. The show was a donation from Prithvi Theatres, and the only expenses incurred were, very small, for the printing of tickets. This was met from the income of Rs. 224/- from a social arranged on the 14th of November, 1946, A I W C Day. A donation of Rs. 101, was given to the Prithvi Theatres, Zholi Fund for Noakhali and the Distressed Areas, as a token in appreciation of the donation of the show from them. I wish to express my thanks to all those who have helped me in the work of the Cultural Section.

## REPORT OF THE LIAISON GROUP IN ENGLAND

Mrs. Grace Lankester, Liaison Officer.

The work of the Liaison Group in Great Britain during past year has been more full of interest and usefulness than during the difficult years of the war. Contacts are made now more easily than was possible then.

It was a particular joy to have with us last spring the President of the A I W C, Mrs. Hansa Mehta who stopped in London for a brief visit *en route* to New York, where she did valuable work on the U.N.O. Commission on the Status of Women. We are glad that Begum Hamid Ali is going shortly to New York to carry on the same good work. Shrimati Konda Parvatidevi and the Maharani of Vizianagaram, delegates to the Fourteenth Congress of the International Alliance at Interlaken and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, on her way to the U.N.E.S.C.O. meetings, in Paris in November, visited England. We are intensely proud of the part that Mrs. Pandit has played in international affairs as leader of the Indian Delegation to the United Nations Assembly.

Miss Agatha Harrison on her return from India in June gave a vivid account of the months she spent in India.

The A.I.W.C. Central Office Secretary asked for literature and information regarding work for the welfare of women and children in Great Britain, for the Research Bureau. The Liaison Officer met with a ready response from Officials in the ministries of Food, Health Education and the Children's Department of the Home Office and also from voluntary organisations such as National Council of Social Service, the College of Midwives, the National Baby Welfare Council and several others who have all promised to keep your Research Bureau supplied with their propaganda and reports. Miss Dickinson also made contacts with the Arts Council for the same purpose. Members of the Liaison Group will always be glad to help visitors from India to see something of the social work that is being carried on in England.

At the request of the Foreign Relations Officer A.I.W.C., we have been glad to bring help in suggesting contacts with women's organisations and their personnel in Asian countries. We shall follow eagerly all developments as regards the Inter-Asian Conference next year in Delhi.

The Liaison Group Committee continues to have Mrs. Corbett Ashby as its Chairman with Miss Solomon as Hon. Secretary and Miss Dickinson as Editor of the Bulletin and Hon. Treasurer. Mrs. Lankester remains Liaison Officer. The Committee has been strengthened by the co-option of several new individual members with experience and knowledge of India including Mrs. Handoo. It would welcome a representative nominated by the A.I.W.C.

Miss Dickinson says that the news letters of the A.I.W.C. are always interesting and do much to make each issue of the Bulletin really useful and worthwhile.

The Committee greatly appreciated the invitation of the A.I.W.C. to attend the Annual Session at Akola as special visitors. The Liaison Group is glad to appoint the Liaison Officer and Miss Dorothea Lankester as their representatives.

The Liaison Group has helped to educate public opinion in Great Britain with regard to India's right to freedom. May we hope that when her freedom is assured a new friendship may develop between our two countries and ever more useful co-operation in the years that lie ahead.

#### REPORT OF THE SECRETARY CENTRAL OFFICE

During the year under review work has proceeded in the Central Office under the main heads of publications distribution of "Roshni" collection of information and contact with foreign countries. Owing to the increasing pressure of work a typist was engaged from March this year to assist the Secretary. The main features of the work are as follows —

*Publications* — The Symposium on "The Education of Women in Modern India" was published in the month of September. Royalties at 10% of the

published price on copies sold, payable to all the various authors who very kindly wrote for the Conference, amounted until the 30th June, 1946, to Rs. 529-3-0. Every author has made donation, either in full or in part, of her royalty to the Central Office for its Publications Department as under:—

Shrimati Kamladevi ( Tract No 1 and Book No. 1 in Cultural Series )	Rs	As.	P.
	100	0	0
Mrs Renuka Ray ( Tract No. 2 )	79	1	0
Mrs. Kitty Shiva Rao ( Tract No. 3 )	90	14	0
Mrs Hansa Mehta (Tract No. 4 )	52	12	0
Dr Hilda Lazarus ( Tract No. 5 )	36	4	0
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Total donated ...	358	15	0

An Editor's Royalty at the rate of 5% of the published price on books sold, amounting to Rs 264-12-6 was paid by the Publishers also upto 30th June, 1946. It accrued as profit to the Office. The Office has also, as usual, received a 25% discount on books bought by it for sale or distribution. After adjusting all accounts, the net profits of the Publications Department amount to Rs. 347-7-6, since publications were started.

With regard to the book, ' Towards a National Theatre ', the President has agreed to the request of Shrimati Kamaladevi that she withdraws it from the A.I.W.C. Series after the first edition is sold out, for the purpose of bringing out an enlarged edition privately. The President has also acceded to the request of Mrs. J. M. Kumarappa that, after the present edition is sold out, she be allowed to edit and bring out an enlarged symposium on "The Education of Women in Modern India" privately.

This year having been a difficult one for publications of all types, the printing of documents such as the " Charter of Women's Rights & Duties ", the Memorandum on " Planning for National Welfare ", and the " Report on Tea Plantations Labour " was unduly delayed. Several firms which were approached for the Conference Publications were unwilling to take them up. Now, however, a new Agreement has been signed with Messrs Thacker & Co Ltd, and a Paper Quota has been obtained.

Under the new Agreement, a symposium edited by Mrs Kamala S Dongerkery, on " Juvenile Literature in India " has already been published. The book " Kasuti, Embroidery of the Karnatak " also by Mrs Dongerkery, is due out to be next month. In spite of all efforts to have it brought out before this Session, the publishers were unable to put it through, owing to the high standard of production aimed at and the technical work entailed. The following manuscripts are waiting to go to press. "Industrial Co-operatives" by Mrs Pupul Jayakar, "A Common Civil Code" by Mrs Mithan Lam, and "Some Careers for Women" by Mrs. Avabai Wadia.

*Distribution of Roshni*—In accordance with the decision of the Standing Committee at its meeting in Hyderabad (Sind), the Roshni has been distributed from the Office (save for the English number which was taken over by the Editor from August) in continuous co-operation with the Editor a new list of subscribers has been built up. Their names have been card-indexed and in other ways proper business efficiency is being striven for. A sum of Rs 1 689-4-0 has passed through the Office altogether in respect of Roshni subscriptions and payments (Rs 485-0-0 for English and Rs. 1,204-4-0 for Hindustani Roshni).

The number of subscribers are now as follows: Hindi 458 Urdu 91. The number of loose copies which are sent to Branches and others come to 650 Hindi and 200 Urdu approximately every month.

*Information & Research Bureau*—(a) On the President's instructions, figures are being collected at present on (1) the number of marriages which have taken place under the Special Marriage Act (III of 1872) for 1944, 1945 and 1946; and (2) the number of prosecutions launched against child marriages during the same period of time. The Registrars of Marriages and District Court Magistrates in all the Provinces have been approached for this information, and it is coming in slowly.

(b) At its Calcutta Meeting in July last, the Standing Committee instructed the Secretary to compile an All India Directory of Institutions for Women and information is being gathered for this. A fair amount of data has already come to hand and if every Branch will kindly co-operate by sending in names of institutions in its area it will be possible to make the Directory really comprehensive and informative and to publish it within the next few months.

(c) A list has been started of names of Trusts or Societies which award scholarships for purposes of study or for welfare schemes.

(d) The Madras Branch sent in a request for the names of women members of Legislative Councils, Assemblies, Municipalities and Local or District Boards throughout India. The relevant Government authorities have been circularised for this purpose and whatever information has come in has been passed on to the Branch. It is complete as far as the Legislatures are concerned but not yet as to the numerous Municipalities and Local Boards.

(e) Information is being collected from countries abroad on measures taken by governmental or semi-official agencies for the welfare of women and children. Replies have been received so far from Switzerland, the Netherlands, Brazil, Sweden, Denmark and England. Some of the information is in foreign languages. As for England, Mrs. Lankester, the Liaison Officer, was approached, and she has very kindly made contacts with the Ministries of Food, Health and Education, and the Children's Welfare Department of the Home Office and private organisations.

*International Contacts.*—With the cognisance of the Member-in Charge, Foreign Contacts, Newsletters have been continued to be sent to the London Liaison Group, which have appeared in their Quarterly Bulletin. The third Newsletter was also sent to Mme Amina El Said in Egypt and Dr Hanna Rydh in Sweden. Both replied, appreciating this news service and have indicated that items out of the Newsletters will be printed in the journals of their organisations. The last Newsletter has been sent to all the above-mentioned and, in addition, to Mrs Jessie Street for the Australian Women's Digest and to the All-Ceylon Women's Conference.

*Reference Library.*—A valuable gift of about 145 books has been made by the Servants of India Society to the Reference Library at the Central Office, for which our grateful thanks have been conveyed to them. The books, which deal with matters regarding women and children, are chiefly important English and American publications. Press-cuttings have been continued to be filed.

*U. N. O.*—Following upon the arrangements made by the President, letters and forms were received from the Secretariat of the Social and Economic Council regarding formalities to be fulfilled in order to be placed on the list of organisations in consultation with the Council. Detailed data which had been called for was supplied and the final reply is now awaited.

*General.*—The Employment Bureau projected last year has not been put into operation on a re-consideration by the President, of all the circumstances. Instead, the request for co-operation of the Regional Director, Government Employment Exchange, was acceded to, and membership on his Advisory Committee accepted. It appears that Government have still not settled the terms of reference for this Committee and, therefore, it has not been convened as yet.

*Dr. Malimbai Sukthankar*, Hon. Treasurer, A.I.W.C., then submitted the audited Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ending 31st October, 1946. \* Proposed by *Masuma Begum Hosain Ali Khan* and seconded by *Mrs Lakshmi N. Menon*, it was adopted unanimously.

At the request of the President, the following Visitors from abroad, who had brought messages of good wishes from different organisations abroad spoke to the audience.—

*Mrs. Grace Lankester* from Women's International League for Peace and Freedom,

*Miss Dorothea Lankester* from Young Britain,

*Lady Pares* from the International Alliance and the British Commonwealth



*Miss Godley* (England) from the British Federation of Business and Professional Women and

*Mrs Tennyson* of the Friends Service Unit of England and America.

*Lady Rama Rau* thanked all the representatives of the different countries for the trouble they had taken in coming to the Conference and for their interest and co operation.

#### FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE

*The President* then asked *Shrimati Konda Parvatidevi* Leader of the Delegation to the Fourteenth Congress of the International Alliance of Women, at Interlaken, Switzerland to give a report.

*Shrimati Konda Parvatidevi* said : ' The Fourteenth Congress of the International Alliance was held in the month of August, 1946 at Interlaken Switzerland. The All-India Women's Conference appointed *Shrimati Vidyavati Devi* the Maharanee of Vijayanagaram and me as delegates to the Congress.

The Congress was presided over by *Mrs Corbet Ashby* Delegates from many parts of the world numbering 130 attended the Congress They came from Great Britain, U.S.A., Australia, Egypt, Ukraine New Zealand Palestine and some other countries

The Congress commenced its sittings on August 10 and continued for 7 days The reports of the various associations in different countries were read including that of India.

The opening session of the Congress began with the speeches by representatives of the Swiss Government, the Municipality of Interlaken, and the Association of Women's Suffrage Then followed the Presidential Address The leader of each delegation was then asked to address the Congress. I spoke on the non-violent struggle for Independence of India carried on under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi and the great sacrifices made by Indian women along with men in that struggle I also spoke of the work done by A.I.W.C and the Charter on Women's Rights and Duties.

On the night of the 11th August the Alliance gave a reception to the delegates The discussions on the draft resolutions took place on the 12th, and on succeeding days. The speeches were mostly in English and in French.

The resolutions were very comprehensive dealing with political social economic, and educational aspects of life For example the Congress noted with horror and indignation the calamities and destruction that the recent war inflicted on humanity It appreciated the work that was done till then by the United Nations Organisation. The Congress hoped that if the U.N.O would work with perseverance and ardent zeal it could succeed in preventing international wars and conflicts

The Congress earnestly desired that democratic forms of Government should be established in all countries. The Congress also looked forward for the day, when in all countries no distinction remained between men and women in connection with appointments in judicial, administrative, and political departments, so that women might have the opportunity to contribute their share in the discharge of the responsibilities for the welfare of the citizens and the good of the states.

Public meetings were held in the towns of Bern, Thoune, and Interlaken where delegates of the Congress spoke.

At present, mostly European women are taking interest in the activities of the Alliance. In future, the women of the Eastern countries like India, Burma, China, and Japan should join hands with them in a larger measure and bring to the fore-front, the problems of the women."

## THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S SECOND CHARTER CONFERENCE

*The President* then requested Mrs. Mithan Lam, Leader of the Delegation to the Australian Second Charter Conference, consisting of herself and Miss Kapila Khandwala, to give a report.

*Mrs Mithan J Lam* said: "I had the honour to go to Australia as the leader of the delegation on behalf of the All-India Women's Conference to the Australian Women's Second Charter Conference, held at Sydney from the 4th to 11th August this year

*Mrs Jessie Street*, a famous and dynamic personality, and one of the leaders of the women's movement, whom we had the pleasure of welcoming at our Conference at Hyderabad (Sind) last year, was the President of the Charter Conference. As is well known, in 1943, Mrs Street and others framed the Australian Women's Charter of Rights which was passed at their first Conference. The second Conference was called to make certain amendments in the Charter and was called "Win the Peace" Conference, for Australians feel, as do other conscious, enfranchised women all over the world, that women must work as hard to win the peace, a real lasting peace, as they did to win the war, and that women must work now before it is too late, and make their voices heard.

Though there was some opposition from the older and more conservative women's associations, 72 women's organisations were affiliated to the Conference, ranging from the Housewives Association to the Hotel Employees Union. This Conference was not intended to be a new organisation, as Mrs Street explained later but was meant to be a co-ordinating body, co-ordinating the work of organisations with similar aims, and providing them with a platform to express their views and work for equality for all, irrespective of race, colour, or sex.

Before the Conference started its work formally two very interesting functions were arranged for the inter-state and the international delegates. On the 3rd a reception was given by the People's Council of Culture at the Teachers' Federation Hall. It was a very friendly gathering; I spoke on women in India and Miss Khandwala about the cultural movements in India, especially, the work of the Indian Peoples Theatre Association.

The Conference started in the morning of the 5th with the consideration of the Constitution. The Y W O A entrance hall was banked with flowers. The Conference hall was decorated with the flags of the United Nations and with banners bearing slogans: Atomic Energy For Life Not Death, 'Full Employment and Social Security and many such slogans. On the wall behind the rostrum was a big banner with the badge of the Charter Conference with the words 'No Justice Without Equality' round the outer band of the circle.

*Dame Mary Gilmore* D B E. formally declared the Conference open. This great woman was 81 years old that day and was given a rousing ovation. Welcoming the delegates she said: 'It is out of such gatherings as these that international and individual progress grows for the history of women is the history of civilisation. No country gives greatly to civilisation—and especially to mercy and justice if its women are not free just as no race or country gives greatly if ruled by another.

Messages were then read. I read out the message of the All India Women's Conference sent by our President Mrs. Hansa Mehta and gave them our greetings for a very successful Conference.

There were two sessions every day dealing with various topics, with a different Chairwoman to conduct the meeting. The Charter itself was a very comprehensive piece of work dealing with every disadvantage which women suffer in the world.

Some of the important points of the Charter may be briefly enumerated:

- (1) The elimination of sex discrimination by amending the Constitution.
- (2) The same status, opportunity, remuneration, and responsibility to be given to women as to men.
- (3) Better help and facilities to be given to the mother and home maker.
- (4) Improved health and community facilities.
- (5) Better education directed towards peace and international understanding.
- (6) Removal of all injustice and freedom for all colonial people.
- (7) Fair deal for the aborigines.
- (8) Application of Atomic Energy for peace and human welfare.

There was a hot discussion on the resolution which asked that home makers should be endowed by the State by a personal endowment of 30 shillings a week. It would give a certain amount of economic independence to the woman. Other speakers stated that this clause would come in the way of the increase in the wages of the woman worker and that the best solution of this question was to press for an increase in the basic wage.

On the 6th, the Hon'ble Mr C E Martin, Attorney General for New South Wales, spoke on the 'Family Relations Bureau'. He cited figures to show that divorce was on the increase in Australia, giving the causes as being (a) hasty war-time marriages, (b) long separation of the spouses on account of the husband being overseas. The Bureau was started with the object to prevent marriages being broken up.

The Conference passed a resolution recommending amongst other things that solitary confinement, corporal punishment, and capital punishment be abolished. Resolutions on Delinquency, Alcohol, Equal Moral Standard, and Venereal Diseases were next taken. One of the speakers stressed the point that liberal use of alcohol, was according to experts and medical men one of the greatest contributing factors in the incidence of V D. 'We spend more money on liquor than we spend on education, she said vehemently.'

Public meetings were also organised by the Conference in the evening after its regular sessions, which were addressed by the international delegates and prominent Australians where some of the important conference resolutions were adopted. At one of these meetings, I spoke about the work of the All-India Women's Conference, stressing our work during the Bengal famine, our agitation for subsidised milk scheme, and what we are doing at present to combat the food shortage. I also spoke about the women in professions in India. At another such meeting Miss Khandwala spoke about the Charter framed by the A I W C, and the trade union movement, and the food crisis facing India.

But the most interesting 'domestic' resolution was the one dealing with the aborigines of Australia. They are the original inhabitants of Australia, but they do not get a fair deal in their own land. They were not given the same educational facilities as the whites, though many of them were capable of advanced studies, nor did the basic wage apply to them. Their wages were low, and in many instances on the reservations and the mission stations, they were not paid their full wages, a substantial amount was banked, but the aborigines never seemed to get them again.

I was asked to speak at the Unitarian Church both in Sydney and in Melbourne. I chose as my subject 'Peace and the Colour problem'. I dealt with the 'White Australia Policy' therein and stated that coloured peoples however educated and capable of living according to western standards, were debarred from settling in Australia, merely because of the colour of their skin and that was a thing that greatly hurt the coloured peoples. I was also asked to speak on the air by the Australian Broad Casting Corporation at their 'Guest of Honour' hour.

The last function of the Conference, and perhaps the most attractive and impressive from the ordinary woman's point of view was the great procession,

when nearly two thousand women marched through the streets of Sidney with their heads held high marching confidently and resolutely with the banner of the Conference proudly held high.

Wherever we went, we were received with great kindness, warmth, and courtesy as representatives of India. We tried to establish good contacts and have succeeded in doing so, and to promote feelings of goodwill towards India.

*The President* asked Miss Kapila Khandwala second Delegate to Australia, to speak.

*Miss Khandwala* said The Second Australian Women's Charter Conference was held in Sydney from the 4th to 11th August, 1946. To the Conference came delegates from India France Jugoslavia and New Zealand The Soviet delegation of six leading women was prevented from attending the Conference

*Mrs Jessie Street* presiding over the meeting in her welcome address pointed out that the Charter Conference worked for equality of all irrespective of nationality or race or sex

*Dame Mary Gilmore*, feminist, writer poetess and Labour Pioneer formally declaring the Conference open said The History of Women is the History of Civilization No country gives greatly to civilization if its women are not free

Messages of greetings were received from fraternal organisations all over the world including those from Madame Nina Popava (Moscow) Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt (U S A) and Miss Ellen Wilkinson (England)

There were two sessions a day and each session had its own Chairman The Charter passed by this Conference is a most valuable document and a blue print on which women can build to achieve the objective of the Conference viz Equality for all irrespective of Sex. The Charter deals with (1) Elimination of Sex Discrimination; (2) Equality of Status, Opportunity and Pay between Men and Women; (3) Full Employment and Security (4) Fair Deal to the Aborigines (5) Freedom to the Colonies and Use of Atomic Energy for Peace and Welfare of the World.

There were resolutions, asking for a just and lasting peace, increase in basic wage child and mother welfare, education and prison reforms, better conditions for nurses and increased pay for women The Conference also discussed a scheme for improving family life and providing ample opportunities for working women to develop their intellectual and cultural pursuits

*Mrs. Mithan Lam* speaking on some of the resolutions stressed the need for a fair deal to the coloured nations, she also appealed for food for India, and explained the A.I.W.O's work.

I spoke to the Conference of the tragedy of Bengal in 1943 and reminded them that an equally great famine threatened to take the lives of millions of my countrymen, unless timely aid was received by India in food-stuffs, money, and medicines. It was pointed out by me that the situation was aggravated, because India was not free to develop her resources as she liked. The Conference responded to this appeal for help and resolutions to help India with food, medicine, and money were adopted.

The Conference concluded with a Peace Demonstration led by Miss Francis—a co-student with Uday Shankar in Paris. It was stressed by all who attended that there could be no peace without unity and freedom. People of all lands must insist that the Peace Conference shall not fail, that selfish interests shall not prevail over the interest of the peoples of the world, that Atomic Energy must be used for life and not for death, and that its control must be with the U N O. It was truly a grand finish to a very successful conference.

The Charter Conference and the Australia India Association arranged for meetings for us in various state-capitals. There are a few organisations in Australia, which are genuinely interested in India and eager to establish close contacts with some of our organisations. These are (1) a few Trade Unions, (2) The Australian Women's Charter Conference, and (3) The Australia India Association. The last named organisation actually collected nearly Rs 100,000 for India and sent it to Bengal for famine relief in 1943. It is most essential to build up contacts with these organisations in the interests of goodwill and progress of both the countries.

## SECOND SITTING

Sunday, 29th Dec. 1947, 2-30 to 5-30 P.M.

*Lady Ram Rau*, President, called upon the Branch Representatives to read out to the Conference the reports of work done in their respective Branches during the year 1946. Several of the reports were read.

*Dr. Malimbar Sukthankar*, Actg Hon General Secretary announced that annual reports from the following Branches had been received —

### ANNUAL REPORTS FROM BRANCHES\*

Andhra	Bombay
Bengal East	Calcutta
Bengal West	C P South
Bhopal	Cochin
Bhavnagar	Delhi

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\* Note — The Branch Annual Reports are printed separately.

Gujarat	Mysore
Gwallor	Orissa
Hyderabad (Dn.)	Phaltan
Hyderabad (Sind)	Punjab Central
Indore	Sangli
Junagadh	Tamil Nad
Konkan	U P Agra
Madras	U P Oudh
Maharashtra	

### THIRD SITTING

Monday 30th December 1946.

#### Education

The following resolution was then moved by *Mrs. Tarabai Modak* :—

' This Conference is of the opinion that the work of educating children under six years should be taken up by women and recommends that all the Branches of the A I W C should —

- (a) conduct Pro-Basic Schools under their direction for the poorer classes in cities and villages,
- (b) conduct a Child Guidance Clinic for problem children;
- (c) wherever possible conduct training classes for teachers, organisers and workers of Child Guidance Clinics
- (d) send teachers to be trained for Nursery Schools and Child Guidance Clinics, every year till they have a sufficient number of teachers;
- (e) see that organisers and supervisors appointed by them, have general training so that they have a clear idea of the types and requirements of Nursery Schools;
- (f) conduct series of short courses on mothercraft and first-aid for mothers

It is further of the opinion that the Conference should carry on this work for a period of five years after which period it would desire the Government and local bodies to continue the work as an integral part of the Education System

*Mrs. Tarabai Modak* (Bombay) stressed the fact that whilst higher education received serious attention the whole question of child education was neglected on the ground of lack of money. The ages of 4 to 7 in a child were most important but neither parents nor educational authorities were sufficiently mindful of their duties in this respect with the result that owing to a defective foundation our children grew up ill-equipped and often unable

to stand on their own legs in the world. Pre-Basic Education had so far been confined to middle class children, but it must be extended to the poorer classes also, and only women can undertake this work.

Child Guidance Clinics in large numbers were another necessity, where Children's problems would be dealt with scientifically. Every Branch of the Conference should conduct such a clinic and scholarships should be granted in this line.

Trained mothers too were an urgent necessity and child welfare should be a compulsory subject for girls in the Matriculation and Degree courses.

*Miss Kapila' Khandwala* ( Bombay ), in seconding the resolution, said in the course of her speech, that Nursery Schools should be established in every corner of India. This would not only help Primary Education, but also increase adult education, as the parents of children will naturally be influenced by the beneficial results derived from Nursery Schools and Child Guidance Clinics. She urged upon the Conference the necessity of instituting Refresher Courses and carrying on propaganda in this direction at the earliest opportunity.

*Mrs Kamalabai Nimbkar* ( Bombay ), *Mrs Nalimbar Sathe* ( Berar ), *Mrs. Krishnabai Joshi* ( Bombay ), *Mrs. Kalindiba Ghate* ( Berar ), *Mrs Tarabai Patwardhan* ( Phaltan ) and *Mrs Indrabai Maydeo* ( Maharashtra ) spoke on the resolution after which it was passed unanimously.

The following resolutions were then moved from *the Chair* and carried unanimously :—

### Railway Travel

“This Conference deplotes the continued hardship of Third Class passengers on Indian Railways. It demands more convenience, less crowding, and great cleanliness in Third Class compartments.

It further urges that there should be more women's compartments and women inspectors to attend to the comforts of women passengers”

### Communal Unity

“ We, the women of India, representative of all faiths and communities, place on record our feeling of deepest shame and horror at the inhuman conduct of our countrymen in the recent happenings in Bengal, Bihar, and other parts of India. While expressing our deepest sympathy with the victims of the atrocities, we pledge ourselves in thought, word, and



deed to strive for communal unity and peace upon which so largely depends the freedom and progress of our country To this end, we call upon our Branches to

- (a) form Unity Committees ;
- (b) organise joint relief committees and collect funds and clothing ;
- (c) send delegations of women of all communities to the affected areas ;
- (d) give training to women in self-protection and organise volunteer corps

### World Peace

' This Conference welcomes the disarmament proposals recently accepted by the United Nations as a concrete symbol of the World's desire to establish real and lasting peace

*Miss Soosa Mathur* ( U P Oudh ) then moved the following resolution—

### Adult Illiteracy

In view of the fact that no scheme of national education can be successful so long as adult illiteracy exists this Conference calls upon every one of its Branches to organise a volunteer corps and initiate the work for its eradication in their respective areas before the next half yearly meeting

She said that the removal of illiteracy was only a part of the work which had to be done to bring about social and political reform Poverty, ill-health, and ignorance go in a vicious circle When illiteracy is removed self-respect is created in the individual and when self-respect is created half the battle is won.

The problems which China had to face were similar to those which confronted India at present During the period of war literacy in China increased by 60 per cent. The best course which should be adopted to increase literacy in a big country like India was to form what are called " Each one Teach one " Bands a practice which had been followed with success in other countries

A reorganisation of the system under which Night Schools and Training Classes for adults and the Nursery Schools for children were at present functioning in many parts of India, was necessary ; the defects which the system contained should be remedied and a new dignity given to them so that they could become popular among the masses and the purpose for which they were established fulfilled Only then would illiteracy be removed as had been successfully done in a huge country like China.

*Miss Shantabai Daundkar* (Bombay), in seconding the resolution, suggested that no scheme of national education could achieve success, unless there were special well-organised volunteer corps for removing the existing illiteracy among people. The idea was not only to spread, literacy but also to retain it, and for this purpose libraries would be of immense help. Literacy did not only mean the ability to sign a name. The literate person was one who had a position in the society, in the country, and in the world at large. The present night schools were quite useless, as education could not really be imparted in the night when one was tired. Therefore, some other suitable time should be found. She hoped that every Branch of the A I W.C. would begin this work by organising a volunteer corps.

*Mrs. Savitri Rajan* (Madras), *Mrs Indraban Bapat* (Maharashtra), *Mrs Usha Halder* (Bengal West), *Mrs M R Lakshminamma* (Mysore), *Shri Sushila Mehta* (Gujarat), *Mrs. Sushilaben Aqashe* (Berar), and *Mrs Umabai Kundapur* (Karnatak) supported the resolution, and it was passed unanimously.

### Teachers

- (a) "This Conference urges that throughout the country, the number of institutions and scholarships for the training of teachers be greatly increased, and
- (b) The conditions of service, status, and salaries of teachers be adequately improved."

*Shri Manorama Satin* (Benares), in moving the above resolution, said that a great responsibility devolved upon teachers, who were charged with the task of educating the whole country. She regretted that owing to the very high cost of living in the country, the lot of teachers had become most pitiable on account of their low salaries. Their financial worries made the teachers lose interest in their work, and hence education of the people suffered. This explained why the teachers' profession could not draw an adequate number of recruits these days.

*Shri Saraswati Pandit* (Baroda), seconded the resolution. She said that she had experienced the sufferings of a teacher and, therefore, appealed to the delegates to pass this resolution.

*Shrimati Purnan Mehta* (Punjab), moved that the following be added to *clause (b)* of the resolution: "Pay should be fixed according to the recommendations of the Pay Commission. Stability of service should be guaranteed."

Moving the amendment, Purnan Mehta said that the word "adequately" in the second para of the resolution did not convey anything definite and it was necessary to put down a certain minimum limit below which the pay of a teacher would not fall. She said that the first part of her amendment would

ensure a minimum of Rs 60 as salary recommended by the Pay Commission as necessary for reasonable living. Of course this applied to Primary School teachers.

Continuing she said that the number of teachers were decreasing appreciably, owing to the low pay and uncertain conditions of service and more and more teachers were joining professions where they hoped to be better off and had more relief and leisure. It was therefore, necessary that the stability of the service should be guaranteed.

Mrs Yamuna Mokashi (Bombay) seconded the amendment. The amendment was accepted by the mover of the resolution, Mrs Manorama Satin. Mrs Kumalamma Dasappa (Mysore), Mrs Kameshwaramma (Mysore), Mrs. Shanta Mankeshwar (Nagpur), Shri Sudha Roy (Calcutta), Shri Sarla Sharda (Ajmer), Shri Usha Gogte (Maharashtra), Mrs Chaphekar (Berar), Mrs Shanta Kashalkar (Sangli), and Mrs Rabia Begum (Hyderabad Dn.) supported the amended resolution which was then passed unanimously.

### Cottage Industries

The following resolution was then moved by Shrimati Jayashri Raji (Bombay) —

This Conference is of the opinion that one of the best methods to rehabilitate our rural economy and thereby give help to the poor people is the revival of our cottage industries on co-operative basis. It is further of the opinion that in order to provide a sufficiently large number of trained persons to organise Industrial Co-operatives Governments should provide training facilities.

She said that those who had read the China Bills of Democracy would see for themselves how the industrial development of China was brought about through the medium of what were called Industrial Schools run on a co-operative basis. It was necessary that we in India should devise the best methods of helping the poor people in villages. She mentioned that in her circulars to the Branches she had explained the methods by which women's institutions could take up this work of organising cottage industries in the villages. While some of the Branches were running Industrial Classes for training poor women in various arts and crafts they had not studied the problem of how the various cottage industries could be encouraged through them after they had completed training. A scheme had been prepared by her, indicating how cottage industries could be developed on proper lines. Industries such as basket making, coil-making, toy making, button-making, spinning, weaving, food canning etc. could be revived through our women on a co-operative basis to eliminate the middleman's profit.

In Bombay where she had organised a society, women were now earning As. 12 per day, by the elimination of middleman's profit, in place of only As 3 from broom-making industry. It was necessary that a study of other industries in different villages should be undertaken, so that women might be helped more and more.

Many women organisers would be needed for starting cottage industries and if one or two women from each Branch would come forward, she was prepared to start a centre in Bombay. The scheme would provide employment to many women workers and help them to earn upto Rs 100 per month.

*Mrs Manoramabai Chaphekar* (Bombay), in seconding the resolution, said that the cottage industries in India held a very important place in national economy of the country. "If we really wish to help women", she said, "we must organise these cottage industries, so that millions of poor toiling workers may earn a reasonable livelihood. Cottage industries are also very useful for organising women and for solving their economic problems."

*Mrs. Saraswatibai Inamdar* (Konkan), *Miss Kusum Patkar* (Baroda), and *Mrs Shrimatibai Kalantre* (Sangli) supported the resolution, after which it was put to vote and carried unanimously.

### Child Labour

"This Conference demands total abolition of Child Labour in this country within the shortest possible time."

During such period as is required for the achievement of total abolition, this meeting urges upon the Government of India to evolve programmes immediately to provide medical care, health services, and educational facilities to child workers and ratify conventions of the International Labour Organisation, fixing minimum age for admission to service, minimum wage, and prohibition of night work.

This meeting expects members of the Association to take up the cause of improving conditions of Child Labour."

*Mrs Shanta Mukherji* (Bombay), in moving the above resolution, said that the destiny of India depended on the children. It was, indeed, tragic that the children of the poor were being exploited by capitalists and made to work in fields, factories, and shops for long hours. In Bihar, children of 4 to 5 years age were working in factories for 10 to 12 hours. This was also the case in several other Provinces. The consequence of employing child labour was that a large number of children went blind. The condition of children in India was becoming worse day by day.

It was the duty of the Conference to exert its utmost efforts to see that the Government of India abide by the conventions of the International Labour Organisation which prohibited children from working for more than 6 hours. It was really shocking that while Government had enacted such a law it was not faithfully observed. The conditions of labour for children until there was a total abolition of child labour must be improved. Government must fix a minimum wage, provide medical health and educational services prohibit night work and above all strictly enforce a limit of 6 hours of work per day as per the Convention.

She urged all the Branches of the Conference to take active steps and work for the improvement of the conditions of child labour in their respective Provinces.

*Mrs. Krishnabai Joshi* (Bombay) seconded the resolution. She said that it was really tragic that children in this country had to work in factories, fields and shops at an age when they were supposed to go to school and learn good habits so as to become good citizens in the future. It was the duty of the members to improve the condition of these millions of innocent children who were being exploited by capitalists in defiance of the International Law with impunity without waiting for Government to abolish the Law permitting child labour. Children must be educated without which their condition in life would not improve.

The resolution was put to vote and passed unanimously.

#### A.I.W.C. CHARTER AND MEMORANDUM

*Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon* (Lucknow) proposed the following resolution —

"This Conference endorses the Indian Women's Charter of Rights and the Memorandum on Planning National Welfare drafted by the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference and requests members of the Constituent Assembly to incorporate their fundamental points in the Constitution of the Indian Republic."

She said that the Indian Women's Charter contained the fundamental rights of women in respect of education, health, and social services, economic progress and moral standing and other aspects of life affecting women, in relation to the problems which the country was facing today. The most important demand of women was for relief from household drudgery in which 95 per cent of Indian women were involved. This was a just and fair demand in a civilization where the barriers of caste, creed or status had no place, and where human values were of paramount consideration.

This was the age of Charters. There was no reason why we should not have an Indian Women's Charter. As we grow and develop, we would

become more educated and more conscious of our rights, and so we would have to ask for many more rights. What we had asked for in the Charter were not our final demands

India was on the threshold of freedom and was to have a new regime. However, we could not expect a complete change in outlook in social matters. Our political progress had not brought about a progressive social outlook. Therefore, even though we got freedom, our organisation would have still to continue in existence and strive for our natural and just rights.

Referring to the legal rights of Indian women, Mrs Menon said that it was with great difficulty that they had deleted the word "Hindu" from their demands so as to make them applicable to all communities. But, unless they had one common law superseding the laws of different communities, it would be difficult to achieve their ideal of legal rights.

*Mrs Raksha Saran* ( Delhi ), in seconding the resolution said that the condition of women had not materially improved all these years. Women should enjoy equal rights with men in public life, and they should hold the same positions in Municipalities, Councils, etc. That was the foundation.

Woman should have a legal right to get a certain share in her husband's income, whatever the income of the husband may be. Also, there should not be any discrimination between a boy and a girl by the parents. Both should enjoy equal rights in education, marriage, and other aspects of life. Mrs Saran hoped that the Charter would soon become the law of the land.

*Shrimati Kamaladevi* ( Bombay ) moved that the resolution be amended by the addition of the following.—

"It also appeals to the Interim Government and the Provincial Governments to recognise that the social function of the State consists in procuring a minimum of well-being for all its inhabitants. In order to procure this objective, a Social Service Ministry should be instituted at the Centre and in each Province ( a ) to mobilise all available human power to supplement the regular existing educational, health, and other services and ( b ) to initiate such new services for women and children as do not exist at present "

She said that all their demands had been embodied in the Memorandum submitted to the Interim Government, which had assured them that it would be carefully considered. Now that we had our own Government, it was time that we pressed for the installation of a Department, whose function would be to look to Social Service. The political leaders of India, in spite of their well-meaning intentions and anxiety to achieve their objectives, as early as possible,

had to contend with a lot of redtape in Government. She hoped that a woman member would be appointed in the Interim Government so that the cause of women would be properly served

It was also necessary to bring the matter before the Provincial Governments. She urged all the members to read the Memorandum and to take steps to bring it to the attention of their respective Provincial Governments

*Mrs Kitty Shiva Rao* (Delhi) in seconding the resolution said that a Social Service Ministry was the most urgent thing that they needed at present. In the Memorandum great stress was laid on the words "totally mobilised". We should have more people for medical health and educational services and every able-bodied man and woman in the country should work in villages and towns and contribute his or her service in the cause of the nation. There were in India at present 50 000 doctors while two millions were actually needed out of whom about 70 000 should be *women doctors*. There were about 65 000 beds available in hospitals for a total population of 400 millions (i.e. one bed for 6 000 men and women). There should be at least 7 beds available per 1 000 considering the present poor standard of health and vitality of the people.

Measures could be undertaken from now so that these services were adequately increased in course of time. One way of expanding the social service was by making it compulsory for every nurse, doctor or health visitor after he or she had been fully trained to work in a village or in a town, or in a hospital for the degree. This had been done in other countries and it should be done in India too.

Practical ways and means of implementing the resolution should be suggested to Government.

The amendment was accepted by the mover *Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon*.

*Shri Puran Dass Thakurdas* (Punjab), *Mrs. Lajjavati Hooja* (Punjab) and *Mrs. Savitri Rajan* (Madras) supported the amended resolution which was carried unanimously.

#### MATERNITY BENEFIT LEGISLATION

The following resolution was moved by *Mrs. Shantabai Mukherji* (Bombay):—

"This Conference draws the attention of the Government of India to the necessity of framing a composite Maternity Act, paid out of a State Insurance Fund with uniform measures for the whole of India, being made applicable to women workers in regulated and unregulated industries mines,

and plantations, nurses and women teachers, and all working women, and it further recommends the extension of this service for all women working in their homes "

She said that women who had to work for their own living had no provision for maternity, although they were in urgent need in this direction. Women had to work in factories, fields, and in many other hard occupations and since they had no maternity benefits, they were, in fact, starving. It was the duty of Government to help them by providing facilities for maternity welfare.

A Health Insurance Fund for the benefit of workers should be instituted by Government to which the Factory owners, the labourers, and the Government should contribute. While the law regarding maternity benefits had been passed by many Provinces in India, it had been enforced in only a few of the industries in which women were working. The Branch Representatives should see how this law was working in their Provinces and help the Conference in its fight for the rights of labour.

*Miss Kusum Patkar* (Baroda), in seconding the resolution said that in many factories it was the rule that when women workers became pregnant, they were discharged from service. It was the duty of Government to see that they got all the facilities which were due to them under any civilised Government.

*Mrs. Yamunai Kirloskar* (Maharashtra) supported the resolution, after which it was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

## WOMEN WORKERS IN INDUSTRIES AND PROFESSIONS.

*Mrs. Shantabai Mukherji* (Bombay), moved the following resolution.—

"This meeting urges upon the Government to take measures for improving conditions of women workers (a) in industries and low-paid professions, by fixing a minimum living wage, where it is not in operation, (b) for providing facilities for community kitchens, creches, and nursery schools "

She said that women workers had a double responsibility of (a) earning their livelihood and (b) looking after their homes. It was, therefore, quite reasonable that they should enjoy adequate facilities. The wages of women were always very low and the hours of duty comparatively long. A minimum wage, community kitchen, creches, and nursery schools were the minimum requirements of women working in industries and professions.

*Miss Sudha Apte* (Baroda), seconded the resolution. She said that workers in the mines did not get sufficient wages to maintain their families and were subjected to many hardships and inconveniences, wherever they worked.



Government must realise that both men and women contribute equally to the building up of the nation and deserve equal consideration.

*Shri Konda Parvathydevi* (Andhra) supported the resolution, after which it was put to the vote and carried unanimously

### LABOUR UNREST

The following resolution was proposed by *Mrs Manjula Gandhi* (Bombay):—

Taking note of the unprecedented strike-wave among workers spreading all over the country this meeting exhorts upon the Central and Provincial Governments to frame ameliorative measures of Labour Welfare based on adequate wage payments removal of unemployment, proper housing and social insurance without resorting to suppression of strikes by repressive measures "

She said that the present wave of strikes all over the country was unprecedented in history and it had affected women workers as well. The cause of this phenomenal upheaval among the labour class was due to the increased cost of living and their consequent demand was for a living wage in the form of bonus dearness allowance or pay. Besides there was the demand for adequate leave with pay and provident fund.

As a result of the closure of factories owing to the cessation of hostilities nearly 50 lacs of workers were going to be thrown out of employment. Labour deserved a fair deal from the present popular Governments in the Provinces. She regretted that by the passing of the Industrial Relations Bill the only weapon in the hands of the labour for the enforcement of its just and right demands was sought to be taken away by Government.

*Mrs Sarla Gupta* (Delhi) seconded the resolution. She said that so far certain people were under the impression that the workers were being instigated by unscrupulous leaders to go on strike in order that thereby the workers could achieve something or the other. The real cause of the strikes lay in the fact that the cost of living had gone up considerably and the workers being just human beings had to follow the only course open to them. The conditions under which workers lived were most appalling and were not at all conducive to their own as well as to their children's health.

*Miss Sudha Roy* (Calcutta) moved that the words, "without resorting to suppression of strikes by repressive measures" be deleted and the following be inserted instead after the words "social insurance" —

and to set up tripartite committees including representatives of workers and employers in every mill and industry for prompt disposal of disputes."

She said that in every industry there must be a committee appointed to arbitrate, when disputes arose between the workers and the employers. This committee should be composed of Government officials, mill-owners, and labourers

*Dr. Phulrenu Guha* (Calcutta) seconded the amendment

The amendment was accepted by the mover. The amended resolution was carried unanimously.

### Milk

The following resolution was proposed by *Shri Kumud Chaudhari* (Bowbay) :—

“ This Conference strongly condemns the decision of the Bombay Government to withdraw the Subsidised Milk Scheme, which has proved of immense benefit to 3 lacs of children, and pregnant and nursing mothers in Bombay. It is firmly convinced that the Scheme should be further extended and should form the basis of similar schemes in other Provinces ”

She said the new Milk Scheme to be introduced by Government was going to be managed by those very milk merchants who used to adulterate milk. If Government wanted more revenue in order to meet the deficit arising out of the present Subsidised Milk Scheme, which was a boon to the poor people, they should tax the mill-owners instead of the poor who were already burdened with a number of taxes.

The present Subsidised Milk Scheme was benefiting more than 3 lacs of children, pregnant and nursing women in Bombay. This Scheme came into existence after a lot of agitation by the people and now that the Government had announced its abolition on the grounds of heavy cost, there was widespread regret among the poor and middle-class people to whom the Scheme was very useful. Children were the foundation of the future nation and they were to be saved from under-nourishment and consequent ill-health, the Scheme must be continued by Government at any cost

*Mrs Indirabai Deodhar* (Maharashtra) seconded the resolution. She said that Government were going to extend their new Milk Scheme to Poona. Doctors and food specialists had frankly admitted that the food which the people eat today did not contain adequate vitamins. In spite of this fact, it was astonishing to see that the Government should discontinue the Milk Scheme, which had been of such great benefit to the people, and thus deprive the young children and their mothers of what little nutrition they were getting for the last couple of years

*Mrs Kamalabai Sohm* (Bombay) and *Mrs Indirabai Bhajekar* (Maharashtra) supported the resolution after which it was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

## Interim Government

*Miss Lailamam Naidu* (Hyderabad Dn.) moved the following resolution —

"While welcoming the formation of a Representative National Government at the Centre this Conference expresses its hope that the schemes for the early withdrawal of British Troops from India and Indian Troops from abroad will be implemented without delay

She said that she was in agreement with the spirit underlying the resolution. She read out the relevant passage from the Viceroy's statement on the British Cabinet proposals and pointed out the terms on which the political leaders had accepted the said proposals. The question of the withdrawal of British Troops had already been taken up by all the political parties in the country and the Interim Government had already initiated schemes for withdrawing British Troops and bringing back Indian Troops to India.

*Begum Hafis* (Hyderabad Dn.) in seconding the resolution said that they were all proud of the fact that at long last an Interim Government representative of all the elements of India's political life was installed. She was confident that the Government would now work for the solution of all problems facing the country and she therefore asked the members to allow an opportunity to the Interim Government to work out their programme fully.

*Mrs. Renu Chakravarty* (Calcutta) proposed that the resolution be accepted in the following amended form :-

While welcoming the formation of the Interim Government at the Centre this Conference expresses its hope that the plans for an immediate withdrawal of British Troops from India and Indian Troops from abroad will be implemented without delay; and that there will be a rapid Indianisation of the Army and an early initiation of schemes for the nationalisation of industries."

She said that it was not sufficient to ask for the early withdrawal of the British Troops but a rapid Indianisation of the Army. Also that Sardar Baldev Singh, the Defence Member once stated that it would take 45 years to Indianise the Army. Indians were now quite competent to hold the most important positions, but unfortunately these were denied to them. In her opinion her amendment adding the words "an early initiation of schemes for the nationalisation of industries" gave force to the resolution by indicating what the people expected from their own Government apart from the withdrawal of British Troops and the Indianisation of the Army.

*Mrs. Mangula Gandhi* (Bombay) seconded the amendment, which was accepted by the mover. The resolution, thus amended was then put to vote and carried unanimously.

### Legal

The following resolution was moved by *Mrs Kitty Shiva Rao* (Delhi) :—

(1) "This Conference desires a re-orientation of the legal status of women in Indian Society. It urges the immediate consideration by the Central Legislature of the Hindu Code Bill. It recommends the introduction of clauses which will uphold the principles of equality as defined by the Charter of Women's Rights framed by the A I.W C.

(2) This Conference demands that wherever customary laws allow divorce amongst Hindus, women should have equal rights with men in getting redress under these laws

(3) This Conference congratulates the Bombay Government on passing an anti-polygamy bill

(4) This Conference deplores the dowry system (*Jahaz*) so universally practised in India. It earnestly appeals to all public-spirited people to rid society of this evil "

*Mrs Jyotsna Mehta* (Indore), seconded the resolution

*Shri Pushpavati Mehta* (Gujarat) moved the following amendment to the resolution :—

Add after *Clause (2)* : " It also appeals to the Indian States to bring their legislation into line with that of British India "

*Shrimati Devi Muzumdar* (Junagadh), seconded the amendment which was accepted by the mover.

*Miss Anwarwalla* (Hyderabad-Dn) supported the amended resolution after which it was carried unanimously

### Constituent Assembly

*Mrs Manorama Satin* (Benares), moved the following resolution :—

" Whilst welcoming the opening of the Constituent Assembly, this Conference earnestly hopes that it will soon be fully representative of all sections of the people of India and operating as a fully sovereign body, its task of framing the Constitution of a free and democratic Indian Republic, may be successfully achieved

It further recommends that the members of the States to the Constituent Assembly should be elected representatives of the people "

She urged that the representatives on the Constituent Assembly should be those who were elected by the people and not appointed at random as was done at present owing to the defects of the present Constitution.

*Shri Vidyavati Seth* (Punjab) seconded the resolution

*Miss Manukuntala Sen* (Calcutta) moved that the resolution be amended by the addition of the following at the end of the second para—

"It is of the opinion that there should be no-compulsory grouping of the Provinces against the wishes of the people concerned

She said that the present Provincial boundaries were not made in consultation with the wishes of the people and if compulsory grouping was enforced it would create difficulties in the framing of the Constitution and hindrance in the work of the Constituent Assembly. The chaos which would thus result in the country would give an opportunity to the British to justify its supreme control over the affairs of the country

*Shrimati Snehalata Sanyal* (Punjab) in seconding the amendment, said that the grouping idea was the chief weapon in the hands of the British Government to carry out their nefarious designs.

*Shrimati Kaviladevi* (Patron) opposed the amendment. She said that it was the main concern of the big political organisations in the country. She therefore, thought that it would be in the interests of the Conference not to discuss controversial political questions and to give their verdict on them.

*Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade* (Patron), *Mrs. Raksha Saran* (Delhi), and *Shrimati Hansa Mehta* (Patron) opposed the amendment, while *Mrs. Parin Ramesh Chandra* (Punjab) supported it.

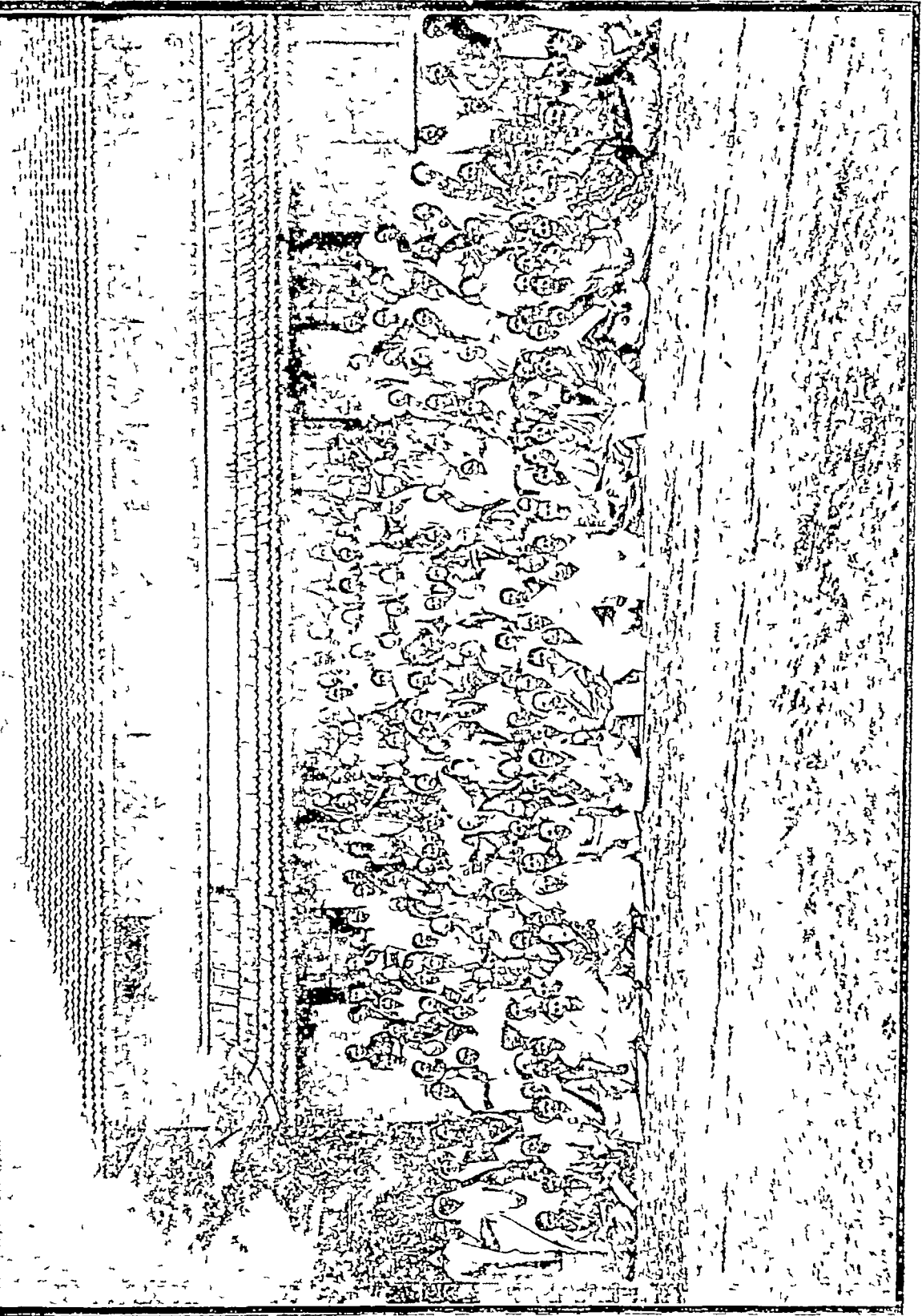
The amendment was put to the vote and was declared lost.

The original resolution was then carried unanimously

The following three resolutions were moved from the Chair and adopted unanimously :—

#### South Africa

"This Conference welcomes the decision of the U.N.O., condemning the Anti-Indian Legislation in Government of South Africa, as being a violation of the U.N.O. Charter and expects South Africa to revise their anti-racial policy and thus establish justice towards racial groups. It believes that a negation of this basic principle is likely to hamper the establishing of world peace."



DELEGATES TO THE XIX SESSION OF THE  
ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE  
AKOLA (BERAR)



## Goa

"This Conference whole-heartedly supports the struggle of the people of Goa for civil liberties. It strongly urges the immediate recognition of the full civil rights of the people and the immediate release of all political prisoners"

## Children's Charter of Rights

"This Conference recommends that a Children's Charter of Rights be framed"

## Juvenile Delinquency

The following resolution was moved by *Mrs. Mithan J Lam* (Bombay):—

- (1) "This Conference is of opinion that the Provincial and States Governments should, with a view to check juvenile delinquency, introduce and/or expand Remand Homes and Children's Courts in all the cities and big towns of India
- (2) It is further of the opinion that the Schedule to the Prevention of Child Labour Act should be extended to all the Provinces and be implemented without delay.
- (3) This Conference is of the opinion that an All-India Children's Protection Act should be passed along the lines of the Bombay Children's Act, in order to prevent child begging, cruelty to children, juvenile smoking and drinking"

Mrs Lam said that modern methods of treatment should be applied to those young unfortunate children who were the victims of society. Delinquency was brought about by poor housing conditions, by unhappy home life due to the criminal tendencies of the parents themselves, which had not been checked in youth. In Bombay these children were being trained in the art of thieving and other bad habits by gangs of adult thieves. She urged that Government should establish Remand Homes and Children's Courts in every part of the country.

Regarding child labour she said that children under 12 were not supposed to be put in certain occupations and a list of these occupations was given in the Act, e.g., shellac industry, carpet-making, making of inflammable materials, etc. She referred to the complaint made by many members that this Act was not properly enforced in any Province. This was certainly so. In Bihar, for example, children of 8 and 9 years had to work in the mica industry. The Act was also not observed in CP and UP. She remarked that all the Provinces should uniformly and rigidly enforce the Act



*Shrimati Vidyawati Arya* (Punjab) seconded the resolution and *Miss Kokila Doraiswamy* supported the resolution after which it was carried unanimously

The following resolutions were then moved from *the Chair* and were passed unanimously —

### Food

This Conference views with anxiety the continued food crisis in the country. It strongly feels that the Central Government must enforce a common All-India Food Policy on the following lines.—

- (a) Set up popular village committees which will organise the sale of surplus food-grains on a co-operative basis where they do not exist, after ascertaining the needs of the village
- (b) Compulsory monopoly procurement by Government of food-grains to be enforced through these village co-operatives or village committees
- (c) Distribution in urban or deficit rural areas to be supervised through popular local committees
- (d) Severe action must be taken against those who have more than their own needs
- (e) Grow more Food Policy must be put into practice by helping "Kisans" with modern agricultural implements, cheap seeds, proper irrigation, and subsidy wherever necessary

Finally we urge that the Central Government must frame a long term Food Policy which will ensure at least a minimum required nutritious diet to every Indian at a price within the reach of all "

### On Suppression of Immoral Traffic

Realising that complete abolition of immoral traffic can only take place in a society where complete freedom of opportunity is ensured for all this Conference demands the following ameliorative measures

- (a) Establishment of large numbers of women's homes to teach the needy and helpless a craft or profession in order to prevent them from falling prey to prostitution.
- (b) In the case of rescued women the establishment of proper aftercare homes where they may be brought back to normal life
- (c) Tightening up of all immoral traffic laws in all the Provinces and States
- (d) Summary punishment of all found guilty of aiding and abetting prostitution including Police Officials if they are found guilty of dilatory tactics."

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### Repression

*Shrimati Kamal Kamath* (Maharashtra) moved the following resolution —

“ This Conference views with concern the recent actions of the Police and Military in resorting to lathi-charges, firing and other encroachments on the civil liberties of people. This Conference, therefore, demands :

- (a) Wherever such incidents take place the Provincial Governments or State Authorities must immediately set up a non-official committee to inquire into the action of the Police or Military.
- (b) Wherever women have been involved, women must be included in the non-official enquiry committee
- (c) Since every citizen is entitled to her or his political opinion, nobody, holding any particular political opinion, should be penalised for doing so.
- (d) All the remaining political prisoners, such as R I N, I N A, and others who are convicted, must be forthwith released. Further cases pending against political workers must be withdrawn ”

She said that they had to put many hopes in their own Government whom they had elected, but she was sorry to note that instead of receiving encouragement from it they were being suppressed. The Congress had been fighting for those very civil liberties, which after it came to power, people were being deprived of. She cited, for example, the incidents in Bombay and Amalner, which showed how the civil liberties of the people were curtailed by the Congress Government. She appealed to Government to appoint committees to inquire into the action of the Police and Military wherever there had been allegations of excesses.

*Miss Kusum Ranadive* (Bombay), in seconding the resolution, said that she could show solid proofs where Government had encroached upon the civil liberties. In the strike of the S I Railway many women were imprisoned. Women workers on a farm in Travancore also met with the same fate. The R I N prisoners were also in the same position. She cited the examples of *Shrimatis Vijaya Bhagwat* and *Godavari Gokhale* who had fought hard against the repression of Government.

*Mrs. Durgabai Joshi* (Berear) supported the resolution.

*Shrimati Kamaladevi* and *Masuma Begum Hosain Ali Khan* (Hyderabad-Dn), opposed the resolution.

*Miss Sarla Gupta* (Delhi) moved that the resolution be amended by the addition of the following after *clause (a)*.—

“ and the misuse by the officials of the Special Powers Act,”

Miss Gupta urged that a committee should be appointed by Government to look into the action of the Police and to see that they do not misuse the Special Powers Act.

*Shrimati Vidyavati Seth* (Punjab) seconded the amendment, which was accepted by the mover of the resolution *Shri Kamal Kamath*. The resolution, thus amended, was put to the vote and carried by a majority

### Zamindari System

*Mrs. Hayrah Begum* (Bombay) moved the following resolution —

"This Conference feels that the Zamindari System has been one of the biggest factors for perpetuating the poverty of the agrarian population and for aggravating the food crisis

It therefore welcomes the proposed move by those Provincial Governments for the abolition of the Zamindari System and demands that this proposal be adopted and put into practice by all Provincial Governments in the country and the Indian States "

*Shrimati Shakuntala Gargaj* (Punjab) seconded the resolution, after which it was put to the vote and carried unanimously

### States

*Mrs Rajani Khandkar* (Indore) then moved the following resolution —

This Conference re-iterates its condemnation of repressive measures in most of the Indian States. It deplores not only the attacks on peoples organisations banning meetings and processions, mass arrests and imprisonment of leaders; the denial of civil liberties of individuals and lathi-charges and firing on unarmed crowds, but the entire system whereby autocratic rulers in the Indian States rule over one-fourth of India's population. It lends its support to the demand of the people of the States for full responsible and representative Government.

This Conference urges upon the Indian States

- (1) fully to co-operate with the united effort that is being made to devise a suitable constitution for a free and democratic Indian republic.
- (2) to include a just proportion of women citizens among the States representatives to the Constituent Assembly "

She said that though the war was over people were deprived of all civil liberties in Indian States. Police atrocities on popular organisations were rampant, banning of meetings and processions still continued, and frequent mass arrests and imprisonment of leaders had become the order of the day

She claimed that nobody would like such rule where people did not have safety of their honour, life and property, and where there was no responsible Government

*Miss Tara Hosangadi* (Baroda), in seconding the resolution, said that even in advanced States like Mysore and Baroda repressive measures were being adopted. The condition of the people in the smaller States could, therefore just be imagined.

*Shrimatis Rangan Acharya* (Junagadh) and *M. R. Lakshamma* (Mysore) supported the resolution, after which it was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

### Conditions of Service

The following resolution was then moved from the *Chair* and carried unanimously :—

“ Taking note of the fact that war and necessity have brought about a large increase in the number of women employed in professions and Government services, the All-India Women's Conference wishes to focus Government and public attention on the totally unsatisfactory conditions of their work. In the opinion of the Conference, these conditions are responsible for both reducing the efficiency of the workers and for failing to attract the right type of women for such services. It, therefore, demands that women in the professions be guaranteed—

( a ) stability of service,

( b ) adequate basic wage with D A ,

( c ) equal pay for equal work,

( d ) grades and scales of pay,

( e ) proper leave rules and Provident Fund,

( f ) maternity benefits and creches,

( g ) due respect and recognition of their status,

( h ) separate essential amenities for women such as separate common rooms, lavatories, etc ”

**Fourth Day, 31st December, 1946**

The Constitution, as amended by the Constitution Committee, was then taken up, clause by clause, and passed \*

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\* The new Constitution as adopted at the Conference on the 31st December, 1946, was latter declared to be null and void by legal opinion

At this stage *the President* declared the results of elections for the offices of the Vice Presidents the Hon. General Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer, as follows and each Office-bearer was greeted with acclamation —

#### Vice Presidents

Mrs Urmila Mehta  
Kulsum Sayani  
Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan  
Anasuyabal Kale  
„ Radhadevi Goenka,  
Masuma Begum Hosain Ali Khan.

#### Hon General Secretary

Mrs. Indira Maydeo

#### Hon Treasurer

Dr Mrs Malinibal Sukthankar  
(re-elected unopposed)

*Lady Rama Rau*, President, winding up the proceedings of the Session said —

In summing up the proceedings of the Conference I myself feel that we have been able to accomplish a fair amount of work especially with regard to our Constitution, which has been waiting for ratification for nearly two years. Besides the normal work of passing resolutions we have considered urgent and important matters of the day.

It is, however my very pleasant task before we break up to offer thanks to those who have been kind enough to entertain us during our stay here. First of all we must thank the Reception Committee through its Chairwoman, Shri Radhadevi Goenka, and the Secretary Mrs Pramillata Oke, and all those little volunteers who have been at our service day and night. The Secretary with her band of workers had to plan the whole of this wonderful Conference and I need not tell you that it has been most extraordinarily planned. For a long time we have not had as large an attendance of delegates and visitors as we have had this year.

Then we must thank those who do not belong to our Conference and who have also given us their very best endeavour in making us comfortable. I refer here to Shri Brijlal Biyani and other gentlemen who have helped our women workers who are naturally interested in the Conference.

I have to thank the delegates who have attended this Conference. I hope that they as well as the visitors will go back to their respective areas with ideas, which they have been able to exchange with members of different

Branches in different Provinces and States in India The interest shown in the things that are happening today and the desire to start new schemes of work, to undertake new ventures and experiments, are very hopeful signs.

I am extremely sorry that our Hon General Secretary, Mrs Kulsum Sayani, is not here today with us You all are aware that her husband is ill and on account of his illness she could not stay here longer than was absolutely necessary for her to do so As she retires from the position of Hon General Secretary, we would, naturally want to offer her a very hearty vote of thanks for the work she has done during 3 years She has not spared herself at all She has also travelled widely and she has been instrumental in introducing into the Conference a good deal of latent enthusiams

With regard to the Members-in-Charge, they will automatically be retiring I thank the Members-in-Charge heartily and sincerely for the work they have done for this Conference during their term I also thank all the Branch Representatives, but I must particularly thank the Representative of Berar Branch, Mrs. Tarabai Ranadive

You know that each year the Conference at this stage undertakes new work; you realise that no scheme can be undertaken unless we first carry a beggar's bowl around, and at the beginning of term of the office of a President, we start with the auspicious task of begging money before we break up. Hence, I want you—all the Branch Representatives and Delegates—to contribute."

*The President* then announced the following donations towards the funds of the All-India Women's Conference :—

Donors	Rs
H. H the Princess of Berar ... ..	5,000/-
H H. the Rani Saheb of Sangli ..	1,000/-
The Nizam's Agent in Berar ... ..	1,000/-
Maharashtra Branch ( Last year ) .	1,000/-
Hyderabad ( Deccan ) Branch .	1,000/-
Mrs Hilda Seligman ( towards Ashoka-Akbar Van ) .. ...	1,000/-
Bombay Branch ... ..	551/-
Punjab Branch ... ..	550/-
Andhra Branch ... ..	500/-
Delhi Branch .. .	500/-
Shri Radhadevi Goenka .. ..	500/-
Baroda Branch ... ..	250/-

Donors	Rs.
Madras Branch	250/
Maharashtra Branch	200/
Mysore Branch	200/
Rani Lakshmidēvi of Phaltan	200/
Masuma Begum Hosain Ali Khan	200/
Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan	200/
Kolhapur Branch	151/
Shri Savitakumari Nanji Kalidas Mehta	151/
U P Agra Branch	150/
Phaltan Branch	101/
Shri Sushilabai Saraf Amraoti	101/
Bhopal Branch	100/
Gujarat Branch	100/
O P North Branch	100/
Indore Branch	100/
O P South Branch	100/
Calcutta Branch	100/
Hyderabad (Sind) Branch	100/
A Sympathiser	100/
Dr Mallinibai Sukthankar	100/
Mrs. Yamutai Kirloskar	100/
Lady Rama Rau	100/
Shri Kasturbai Jain Chordia, Hinganghat	100/-
Begum Hamid Ali	100/
Sangli Branch	100/
Rani Lakshmbai Rajwade	100/
Mrs Bhivapurkar	100/
Karnatak Branch	51/
Konkan Branch	51/
Shri Shantabai Bhayya	51/
Junagadh Branch	50/
Bengal West Branch	50/
Dr Mrs. Ohuri, Buldana	50/
Bhavnagar Branch	50/
In small cash from children	38/8/
Sister Subbalakshmi	30/
Mrs. Kamala V Nimbkar	25/
Mr Anup Mohanlal Parekh	25/-
	<hr/> 16,826/8/

*Shrimati Radhadevi Goenka* Chairwoman, Reception Committee, then thanked the organisation for choosing Akola for the 19th Session of the Conference. Thereby, she said, the fame of the place had increased. She then thanked all the officers, men, and women, who had helped her to make the Conference a success. She also thanked the volunteers who had discharged their responsibilities with dignity.

*Mrs Jamulabai Godbole*, on behalf of the Ram Sahab of Phaltan, thanked the Reception Committee for hospitality and all they had done for her.

*Shrimati Kamaladevi*, in proposing a hearty vote of thanks to the President, *Lady Rama Rau*, said :—

“I believe that Lady Rama Rau has fulfilled a very arduous task which has fallen on her and she has done it with such great zeal and cheerfulness that it has overwhelmed and astonished me. I personally would like to know from her the secret of keeping cheerful, because I do get very irritated. It is mainly because of her cheerful and kind disposition that she has been able to guide the deliberations of this Conference with such conspicuous ability and success, and I am sure, her charm will permeate through the activities of the Conference the whole year round and bring greater success to it. I am quite sure that with her enthusiasm, initiative, energy, and her almost limitless ambition to do great things, she will give us a very useful year of service.”

Concluding, she said : “Let us all thank our retiring President, Mrs Hansa Mehta, who has done 12 months of very arduous work.

*Mr. Kamalamma Dasappa* (Mysore)<sup>1</sup> seconded the vote of thanks to the President

The Conference concluded with “*Vandemataram*” having been sung, all standing.

## RESOLUTIONS PASSED

### 1. Condolences

(a) This meeting of the All-India Women's Conference expresses deep regret at the loss of Mrs Gulbanu Doctor, one of the Vice-Presidents of the All-India Women's Conference and a much-loved social worker of Bombay. It offers heart-felt condolences to Mr Doctor and the other members of his family..

(b) This meeting of the A I W C deeply regrets the passing away of three great sons of India :—

(1) Bhulabhai Desai,

(2) Rt Hon Shrinivas Shastri,

(3) Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya



at a time when their services to the motherland would have been of great importance. It offers sincere sympathy to members of their respective families.

## 2. Congratulations

- (1) This meeting of the A.I.W.C. is proud of the fact that a woman was appointed leader of a National Delegation to the U.N.O. It congratulates the Indian Delegation and particularly Mrs. Pandit on their able advocacy of India's case in South Africa, which led to a great victory. It further thanks all the nations who supported India's just cause.
- (2) This Conference congratulates Mrs. Hansa Mehta on her valuable work on the Commission of the Status of Women at U.N.O. last May.
- (3) This Conference deeply appreciates the good work done by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur as a member of the Indian Delegation to the U.N.E.S.C.O.
- (4) This Conference congratulates Mrs. Mithan Lam on being the first woman chosen as the Sheriff of Bombay. It wishes her a useful and constructive year of service.

## 3. Railway Travel

This Conference deplores the continued hardship of Third Class passengers on Indian Railways. It demands more convenience, less crowding and great cleanliness in Third Class Compartments.

It further urges that there should be more women's compartments and women inspectors to attend to the comforts of women passengers.

## 4. Education

This Conference is of the opinion that the work of educating children under six years, should be taken up by women and recommends that all the Branches of the A.I.W.C. should—

- (a) conduct pre-Basic Schools under their direction for the children of the poorer classes in cities and villages;
- (b) conduct a Child Guidance Clinic for problem children;
- (c) wherever possible conduct training classes for teachers, organisers and workers of Child Guidance Clinics;
- (d) send teachers to be trained for Nursery Schools and Child Guidance Clinics every year till they have a sufficient number of teachers;

- (e) see that organisers and supervisors appointed by them, have general training so that they have a clear idea of the types and requirements of Nursery Schools;
- (f) conduct series of short courses on mothercraft and for first aid for mothers

It is further of the opinion that the Conference should carry on this work for a period of five years after which period it would desire the Government and Local bodies to continue the work as an integral part of the Education System

### 5. Adult Illiteracy

In view of the fact that no scheme of national education can be successful so long as adult illiteracy exists, this Conference calls upon every one of its Branches to organise a volunteer corps and initiate the work for its eradication in their respective areas before the next half-yearly meeting

### 6. Teachers

- (a) This Conference urges that throughout the country, the number of institutions and scholarships for the training of teachers be greatly increased, and
- (b) The conditions of service, status, and salaries of teachers be adequately improved Pay should be fixed according to the recommendations of the Pay Commission Stability of service should be guaranteed

### 7. Communal Unity

We the women of India, representatives of all faiths and communities, place on record our feeling of deepest shame and horror at the inhuman conduct of our countrymen in the recent happenings in Bengal, Bihar, and other parts of India. While expressing our deepest sympathy with the victims of the atrocities, we pledge ourselves in thought, word, and deed to strive for communal unity and peace upon which so largely depends the freedom and progress of our country To this end, we call upon our Branches to :

- (a) form Unity Committees,
- (b) organise joint relief committees and collect funds and clothing,
- (c) send delegations of women of all communities to the affected areas,
- (d) give training to women in self-protection and organise volunteer corps.

## 8. Constituent Assembly

Whilst welcoming the opening of the Constituent Assembly this Conference earnestly hopes that it will soon be fully representative of all sections of the people of India, and operating as a fully sovereign body, its task of framing the Constitution of a free and democratic Indian Republic may be successfully achieved

It further recommends that the members of the States to the Constituent Assembly should be elected representatives of the people.

## 9. World Peace

This Conference welcomes the disarmament proposals recently accepted by the United Nations as a concrete symbol of the World's desire to establish real and lasting peace.

## 10. AIWC Charter and Memorandum

This Conference endorses the Indian Women's Charter of Rights and the Memorandum on Planning National Welfare drafted by the Standing Committee of the All-India Women's Conference and requests members of the Constituent Assembly to incorporate their fundamental points in the Constitution of the Indian Republic. It also appeals to the Interim Government and the Provincial Governments to recognise that the social function of the State consists in procuring a minimum of well-being for all its inhabitants. In order to procure this objective a social service ministry should be instituted at the Centre and each Province (a) to mobilise all available human power to supplement the regular existing educational health, and other services and (b) to initiate such new services for women and children as do not exist at present.

## 11. Interim Government

While welcoming the formation of the Interim Government at the Centre this Conference expresses its hope that the plans for an immediate withdrawal of British Troops from India and Indian Troops from abroad will be implemented without delay and that there will be a rapid Indianisation of the Army and an early initiation of schemes for Nationalisation of Industries

## 12. States

This Conference reiterates its condemnation of repressive measures in most of the Indian States. It deplores not only the attacks on peoples organisations banning meetings and processions mass-arrests and imprisonment of leaders the denial of civil liberties of individuals and lathi-charges and firing on unarmed crowds but the entire system whereby autocratic rulers in the Indian States rule over one-fourth of India's population

It lends its support to the demand of the people of the States for full responsible and representative Government

This Conference urges upon the Indian States :

- (1) fully to co-operate with the united effort that is being made to devise a suitable Constitution for a free and democratic Indian republic;
- (2) to include a just proportion of women citizens among the States representatives to the Constituent Assembly

### 13. Cottage Industries

This Conference is of the opinion that one of the best methods to rehabilitate our rural economy, and thereby give help to the poor people, is the revival of our cottage industries on co-operative basis

It is further of the opinion that, in order to provide a sufficiently large number of trained persons to organise Industrial Co-operatives, Governments should provide training facilities

### 14. Child Labour

This Conference demands total abolition of Child Labour in this country, within the shortest possible time

During such period as is required for the achievement of total abolition, this meeting urges upon the Government of India to evolve programmes immediately to provide medical care, health services, and educational facilities to child workers and ratify conventions of the International Labour Organisation fixing minimum age for admission to service, minimum wage, and prohibition of night work.

This meeting expects members of the Association to take up the cause of improving conditions of Child Labour

### 15 Maternity Benefit Legislation

This Conference draws the attention of the Government of India to the necessity of framing a composite Maternity Benefit Act, paid out of a State Insurance Fund with uniform measures for the whole of India, being made applicable to women workers in regulated and unregulated industries, mines and plantations, nurses and women teachers, and all working-women and it further recommends the extension of this service for all women working in their homes

### 16. Women Workers in Industries And Professions

This meeting urges upon the Government to take measures for improving conditions of women workers (a) in industries and low-paid professions, by

fixing a minimum living wage where it is not in operation (b) for providing facilities for community kitchens creches and nursery schools

### 17 Labour Unrest

Taking note of the unprecedented strike-wave among workers spreading all over the country this meeting exhorts upon the Central and Provincial Governments to frame ameliorative measures of Labour Welfare based on adequate wage payments removal of unemployment, proper housing and social insurance without resorting to suppression of strikes by repressive measures.

### 18. Legal

1 This Conference desires a re-orientation of the legal status of women in Indian Society. It urges the immediate consideration by the Central Legislature of the Hindu Code Bill. It recommends the introduction of clauses which will uphold the principles of equality as defined by the Charter of Women's Rights framed by the A.I.W.O.

2 This Conference demands that wherever customary laws allow divorce amongst Hindu women should have equal rights with men in getting redress under these Laws. It also appeals to the Indian States to bring their legislation into line with that of British India.

3 This Conference congratulates the Bombay Government on passing an anti Polygamy Bill

4. This Conference deplures the dowry system (*Jahaz*) so universally practised in India. It earnestly appeals to all public spirited people to rid society of this evil.

### 19. Milk

This Conference strongly condemns the decision of the Bombay Government to withdraw the Subsidised Milk Scheme which has proved of immense benefit to 3 lacs of children and pregnant and nursing mothers in Bombay. It is firmly convinced that the Scheme should be further extended and should form the basis of similar schemes in other Provinces

### 20. South Africa

This Conference welcomes the decisions of the U.N.O. condemning the anti-Indian Legislation in Government of South Africa as being a violation of the U.N.O. Charter and expects South Africa to revise their anti-racial policy and thus establish justice towards racial groups. It believes that a negation of this basic principle is likely to hamper the establishing of world peace

**21. Goa**

This Conference whole-heartedly supports the struggle of the people of Goa for civil liberties. It strongly urges the immediate recognition of the full civil rights of the people and the immediate release of all political prisoners.

**22. Conditions Of Service**

Taking note of the fact that War and economic necessity have brought about a large increase in the number of women employed in professions and Government services, the All-India Women's Conference wishes to focus Government and public attention on the totally unsatisfactory conditions of their work. In the opinion of the Conference, these conditions are responsible for both reducing the efficiency of the workers and for failing to attract the right type of women for such services. It, therefore, demands that women in the professions be guaranteed :

- (a) Stability of service,
- (b) Adequate basic wage with D A ,
- (c) Equal pay for equal work,
- (d) Grades and scales of pay,
- (e) Proper leave rules and Provident Fund,
- (f) Maternity benefits and creches,
- (g) Due respect and recognition of their status,
- (h) Separate essential amenities for women such as separate common rooms, lavatories, etc

**23 On Suppression Of Immoral Traffic**

Realising that complete abolition of immoral traffic can only take place in a society where complete freedom of opportunity is ensured for all, this Conference demands the following ameliorative measures :

- (a) Establishment of large numbers of women's homes to teach the needy and helpless a craft or profession in order to prevent them from falling prey to prostitution
- (b) In the case of rescued women, the establishment of proper aftercare homes, where they may be brought back to normal life
- (c) Tightening up of all immoral traffic laws in all the Provinces
- (d) Summary punishment of all found guilty of aiding and abetting prostitution including Police Officials, if they are found guilty of dilatory tactics.

## 24 Repression

This Conference views with concern the recent actions of the Police and Military in resorting to lathi-charges, firing and other encroachments on the civil liberties of people. This Conference therefore demands

- (a) Wherever such incidents take place the Provincial Governments or State Authorities must immediately set up a non-official committee to inquire into the action of the Police or Military and the misuse by the officials of the Special Powers Act.
- (b) Wherever women have been involved women must be included in the non-official enquiry committee.
- (c) Since every citizen is entitled to her or his political opinion nobody holding any particular political opinion should be penalised for doing so.
- (d) All the remaining political prisoners, such as R.I.N. I.N.A., and others who are convicted must be forthwith released. Further cases pending against political workers must be withdrawn.

## 25 Zamindari System

This Conference feels that the Zamindari System has been one of the biggest factors for perpetuating the poverty of the agrarian population and for aggravating the food crisis.

It, therefore, welcomes the proposed move by those Provincial Governments for the abolition of the Zamindari System and further demands that this proposal be adopted and put into practice by all Provincial Governments in the country and the Indian States.

## 26. Food

This Conference views with anxiety the continued food crisis in the country. It strongly feels that the Central Government must enforce a common All India Food Policy on the following lines:—

- (a) Set up popular village committees which will organise the sale of surplus food-grains on a co-operative basis, where they do not exist, after ascertaining the needs of the village.
- (b) Compulsory monopoly procurement by Government of food-grains to be enforced through these village co-operatives or village committees.
- (c) Distribution in urban or deficit rural areas to be supervised through popular local committees.

- (d) Severe action must be taken against those, who have more than their own needs
- (e) 'Grow more Food' Policy must be put into practice by helping "*Kisans*" with modern agricultural implements, cheap seeds, proper irrigation and subsidy wherever necessary

Finally we urge that the Central Government must frame a long term Food Policy, which will ensure at least a minimum required nutritious diet to every Indian at a price within the reach of all

### **27 Juvenile Delinquency**

1 This Conference is of opinion that the Provincial Governments—and States should, with a view to check Juvenile Delinquency, introduce and or expand Remand Homes and Children's Courts in all the cities and big towns of India

2 It is further of the opinion that the Schedule to the Prevention of Child Labour Act should be extended to all the Provinces and be implemented without delay

3 This Conference is of the opinion that an All-India Children's Protection Act should be passed along the lines of the Bombay Children's Act, in order to prevent child begging, cruelty to children, juvenile smoking and drinking

### **28 Children's Charter Of Rights**

This Conference recommends that a Children's Charter of Rights be framed

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# THE ALL INDIA WOMEN'S RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR

	Rs.	As.	Pa.	Rs.	As.	Pa.	
To Bank and Other Balances							
Fixed Deposit with the National Bank of India Ltd.	6 020	0 0					
Fixed Deposit with the Bank of India Ltd	3 177	2 0					
With the National Bank of India Ltd	7 596	3 1					
Fixed Deposit with the National Bank of India Ltd Account No 2 ( Provident Fund )	700	0 0					
With the National Bank of India Ltd. Account No 2 ( Provident Fund )	193	15 0					
With the Honorary General Secretary	26	6 9					
With the Honorary General Treasurer	16	9 6					
With the Central Office	4	15 3		17 735	2 7		
To Balance Transferred from Women Worker s Training Camp Account				1,238	10 9		
To Donations				8 048	0 0		
To Box Collection towards Skippo Fund				97	0 0		
To Net Receipts from Publications Received from Publication Departments				347	7 6		
To Affiliation Fees				925	0 0		
To Sale Proceeds of Circulars				276	0 0		
To Sale Proceeds of Annual Reports				24	0 0		
To Membership Fees				6	0 0		
To Delegation Fees				1,770	0 0		
To Miscellaneous Receipts				11	10 0		
To Interest on Fixed Deposits				137	10 0		
To Interest as per Pass Book				32	0 0		
To Authors Royalty Received ( Payable to Shrimati Kamaladevi )				170	4 0		
To Deposit for Affiliation				25	0 0		
To Provident Fund Contribution				227	6 0		
To Interest on Fixed Deposits ( Provident Fund )				8	13 0		
To Amount recovered from the Personal Assistant to Honorary General Secretary against Advance given to him against his Salary				120	0 0		
				31,207	14 10		
<b>*Details of Expenses</b>				Central Office		Honorary General Secretary's Office	
Salary and Dearness Allowance of Secretary etc.				2 730	0 0		
Salary and Dearness Allowance of Typist				688	0 0		
Salary and Dearness Allowance of Peon				600	0 0		
Printing and Stationery				101	1 6	180	10 6
Travelling Allowance to Central Office							
Secretary and Honorary General Secretary				125	5 0	45	5 0
Travelling Allowance to Personal Assistant to Honorary General Secretary						326	8 6
Postage, Telegrams, Telephones and Registration Charges				212	6 6	897	4 3
Office Rent				60	0 0	150	0 0
Skippo Van Expenses						1,549	7 4
Subscription to Press Cutting Agency				66	0 0		
Railway Freight on Records				27	7 6	1,3	9 0
Miscellaneous						95	3 0
Price of Books				6	8 0	3	13 0
Office Equipment				9	8 6	150	0 0
Postage, Telegrams etc. paid to the then President for 1944-45				78	15 6		
Printing of Annual Reports						2 000	0 0
Reporters Honorarium						50	0 0
Expenses Re Rothol Postage	233	10 6		4,705	4 6	5,408	13 3
Other Expenses	153	13 0		419	7 6		
				5,124	12 0		
				347	7 6		
				4,777	4 6		
Less Net Receipts from Publications							

	Rs	As	Ps	Rs	As	Ps
By Central Office Expense*				4,705	11	6
By Honorary General Secretary's Office Expense*				6,408	12	3
By Salary and Dearness Allowance of Personal Assistant to Honorary General Secretary				2,405	0	0
By All India Women's Conference Contribution to Provident Fund				113	11	0
By All India Women's Conference Contribution to wards Roshni Expenses	1 649	8	8			
Add Expenses incurred By the Central Office	419	7	6	2,069	0	2
By Honorary Treasurer's Office Expenses				66	3	6
By Member In Charge ( Labour ) Expense				15	0	0
By Affiliation Fee to International Alliance of Women Voters				27	3	3
By Bank Commission				10	2	0
By Bank & Other Balances						
Fixed Deposit with the National Bank of India Ltd	6,110	0	0			
Fixed Deposit With the Bank of India Ltd	3,224	12	0			
With the National Bank of India Ltd	4,813	12	5			
Fixed Deposit With the National Bank of India Ltd Account No 2 ( Provident Fund )	950	0	0			
With the National Bank of India Ltd Account No 2 ( Provident Fund )	180	1	0			
With the Honorary General Secretary	3	4	6			
With the Member in Charge ( Labour )	10	0	0			
With the Honorary General Treasurer	0	6	0			
With the Central Office	27	12	3			
With the Central Office ( Publication Department )	67	3	0	15,387	3	2
				31,207	14	10

CENTRAL OFFICE

\* STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS OF THE PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST OCTOBER 1946

To Cash Sales of Publications	431 5 0	By Price on Cash Sales of Publication paid to Padma Publication @ 35%	268 8 0
To Editors Royalty on the Books sold @ 5% on the Published Price	264 12 6	By Padma Publication in Final Settlement	442 7 0
To Donations from Authors to the Central Office out of Royalties due to them	362 5 0	By Amount of Net Receipts transferred to main Account	347 7 6
	1,058 6 6		10,58 6 6

Examined and found correct

## DRAFT BUDGET

1946-47

*Income*

	Rs.	a	p
Balance in hand	4,813	12	5
Donations Anticipated Received and Promised	22	744	1 0
Reception Committee Akola	10,000	0	0
Delegation Fees	2	690	0 0
Affiliation Fees	1	000	0 0
Price of Circulars	250	0	0
Roshni — Hindusthani	6	000	0 0
English	2	000	0 0
Publications	500	0	0
Royalties for Tracts	100	0	0
Bank s Interest	150	0	0
Miscellaneous Receipts	200	0	0
	50	447	13 5

*Expenditure*

	Rs.	a.	p.
Hon. General Secretary s Office Expenses	4,500	0	0
Salary of P. A. to Hon. General Secretary	2	800	0 0
Provident Fund Contribution	170	0	0
Central Office Expenses	5,500	0	0
Roshni — Hindusthani	8,400	0	0
English	5,000	0	0
Tracts	300	0	0
Affiliation fees to Inter national Alliance	27	3	0
Hon. Treasurer s Expenses	125	0	0
Members-in Charge	100	0	0
Miscellaneous	100	0	0
Bank s Commission	15	0	0
	27	037	3 0

**Statement Regarding Registration**

The All-India Women's Conference has been duly registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 on the 18th July, 1930

*Memorandum of Association of the All-India Women's Conference*

1 The name of the Conference shall be "The All-India Women's Conference".

2 The Conference shall not engage in party politics, but unite on such points as affect women and children

3 The object of the Conference shall be .

(a) To promote in India the education of both sexes at all stages ,

(b) To deal with all questions affecting the welfare of women and children.

*Signature of Witnesses*

(Sd ) Sarojini Naidu,

„ Sushama Sen,

„ Margaret Cousins,

„ Remeshwari Nehru,

„ A L Huidekoper,

„ Shareefah Hamid Ali,

„ Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya

4 The Standing Committee Members become the Governing Body of the Association

**THE CONSTITUTION OF A.-I.W.C.****Article I***Name*

The name of the organisation shall be "The Association of the All-India Women's Conference," hereinafter to be called the " A - I W.C "

**Article II***( a ) Policy*

The A -I W C. shall not belong to any political organisation nor take an active part in party politics, but shall be free to discuss and contribute to all questions and matters affecting the welfare of the people of India with particular reference to women and children

*(b) Aims and Objects*

- 1 To work actively for the general progress and welfare of women and children
- 2 To inculcate in women and children the ideals of true citizenship
- 3 To promote education along right lines.
- 4 To Work and press for social reform
- 5 To strive to establish equal rights and opportunities for all
- 6 To work for a united India
- 7 To set and demand a high moral standard in all departments of life
- 8 To stand for international goodwill and world peace

## Article III

*Composition**(a) Patrons**(b) Office Bearers**(c) Standing Committee**(d) Branches**(i) Patrons*

(i) Past Presidents

(ii) By special invitation of the A I W C

*(b) Office-Bearers*

(i) President and Chairwoman.

(ii) Six Vice-Presidents

*Note* —A Chairwoman of the Standing Committee shall be elected for the year from amongst the Vice Presidents in case the President does not desire to fill the office.

(iii) Treasurer

(iv) General Secretary

(v) Organising Secretary

(vi) Sectional Secretaries (if required)

*Note* —No paid officers of the A I W C shall be entitled to vote

*(c) Standing Committee*

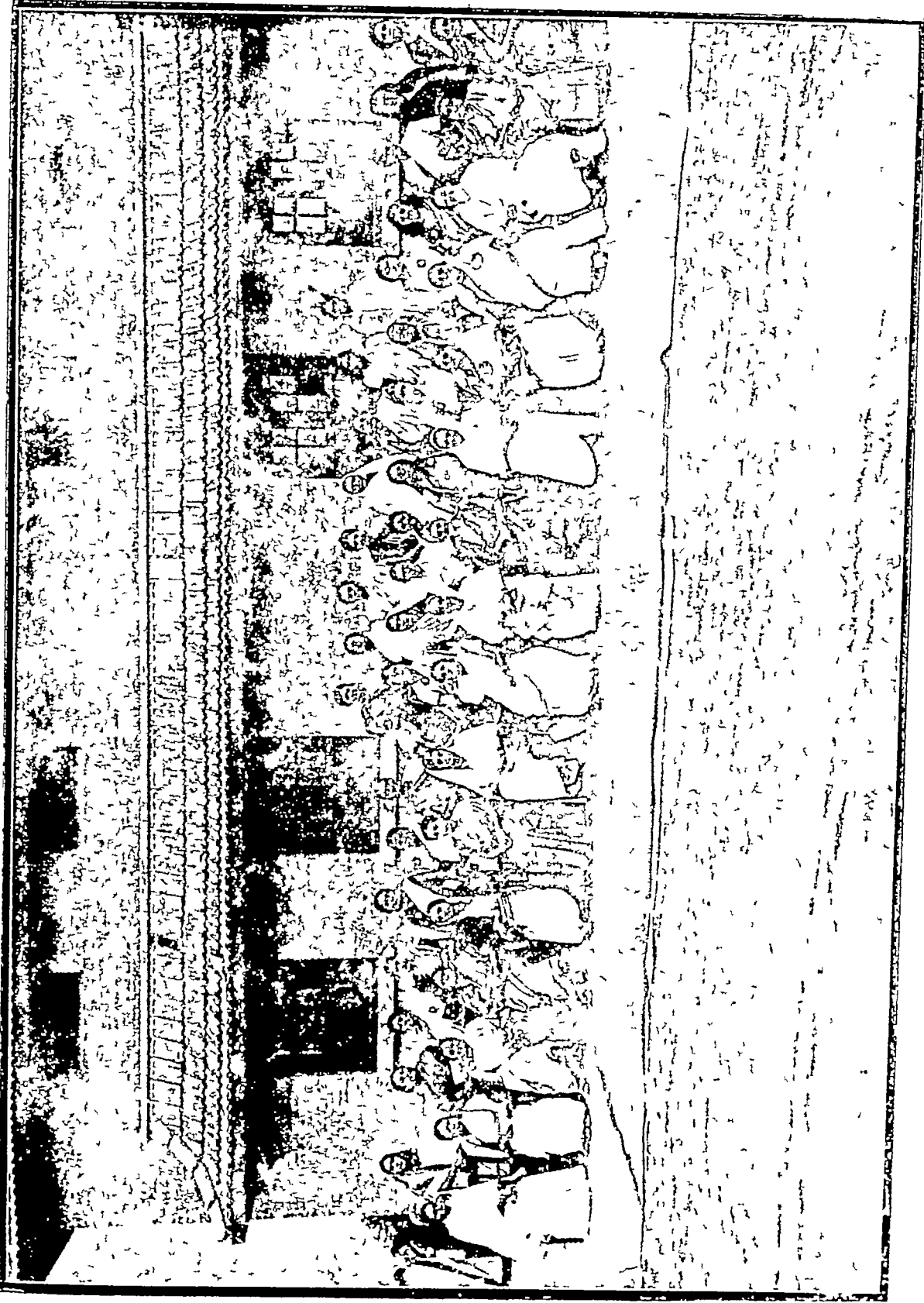
(i) The Office-Bearers

(ii) Members in-Charge of Special Subjects.

(iii) Branch Representatives

(iv) The Liaison Officer in India

(v) The Secretary of the All India Women's Education Fund Association



MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
OF THE A. I. W. C. 1946



- (vi) *Ten Patrons*
  - (a) The retiring President
  - (b) Nine Patrons elected by the Standing Committee
- (vii) Conveners of sub-committees whenever such sub-committees are appointed
- (viii) *Co-opted Members*
  - (a) "Ordinary," not more than 7
  - (b) "Extraordinary", not more than 10
- (d) *Branches*

Areas in Provinces and States, as decided on by the Standing Committee from time to time

*Note*—Patrons shall be entitled to attend the Conference of A -I W C and to vote at the open sessions

Life Associates under the old Constitution will have the right of attending the open session of the Conference and voting as hitherto

#### Article IV

##### *Agencies of Work*

The work of A I W C shall be carried out through

- (1) The Standing Committee and its Executive
- (2) The Branches, Constituent Branches and their Committees, by means of :
  - (a) Conference
  - (b) Meetings
  - (c) Correspondence
  - (d) Publications.

#### Article V

##### *Conferences*

##### I The All-India Conference

- (a) Conferences of the A -I W C. shall be held periodically, at a time and place fixed by the Standing Committee
- (b) The following shall be entitled to attend
  - (1) Patrons
  - (ii) Standing Committee Members
  - (iii) Branch Delegates
  - (iv) Reception Committee Delegates.
  - (v) Special Delegates (by invitation by the Standing Committee)
  - (vi) Visitors (not allowed to participate in the deliberations)

*Note*—Life Associates under the old Constitution will have the right of attending the open Session of the Conference and voting as hitherto



## II *Branch Conferences*

Public Conferences shall be convened annually by all the Branches and their Constituent Branches

### Article VI

#### *Branches and Constituent Branches*

##### 1 *Constituent Branches*

Any group of ten members which accepts the aims and objects of the A I W O may subject to the approval of the Standing Committee become a Constituent Branch and carry on the work of the A I W O

##### 2 *Branch*

A Branch shall be an association of the A I W O in a specified area, with a minimum membership of 50 and shall consist of all the Constituent Branches within that area.

*Note.*—In the event of there being only one Constituent Branch in a given area, its provisional recognition as a Branch shall be decided on by the Standing Committee

*Specified Areas* —Ajmere-Merwara, Andhra, Assam Baroda, Bengal East, Bengal West Berar Bihar Bombay City and Suburbs Calcutta City and Suburbs C P North, C P South Cochin Delhi Gujarat, Gwalior Hyderabad-Deccan Hyderabad-Sind, Indore Jath, Karnatak, Kashmir Kolhapur Konkan Madras City and Suburbs Maharashtra Malabar Mysore N W F P Orissa (Utkal) Phaltan, Punjab Central Punjab East Sangli Sind Tamil Nad Travancore U P Agra, U.P Oudh, Bengal Central.

3 Each Branch shall carry out the ideals of the A. I W O and work under its direction.

4 Each Branch shall be responsible for its own finance

5 Every Branch shall frame its own Constitution in keeping with the Articles and Bye-Laws of the A I W O Association and subject to the approval of the A L W O Executive Committee to which all proposed amendments and alteration also shall be submitted

##### 6 *Representation*

Constituent Branches shall be entitled to ask for the privilege in rotation, of electing the Branch Representatives, S O M

##### 7 *Membership*

Any woman in India over the age of 16 shall be eligible to become a member of a Branch of the A. L W O on payment of subscription to, and in accordance with the rules of that Branch.

**Article VII***Delegations :*

- ( a ) Only Branch Members shall be entitled to attend the annual session of the A I W C Conference as Branch Delegates They shall be nominated and elected by the members of the Branch.
- ( b ) The quota of representation for each Branch shall be determined by allotting one delegate to a number of members which is equal to the total number of members divided by the number of delegates
- ( c ) The number of delegates to any annual session of the A I W C Conference shall be fixed arbitrarily by the Standing Committee at its Half-yearly Meeting
- ( d ) The quota of representation shall be based on the half-yearly returns of membership submitted by the Branches

*Example .*

( 1941 ) Total A I W C Membership	8,000
Total number of Delegates	200
Therefore, 1 Delegate for every	40 Members
If a Branch has 400 Members, it gets 400/40	10 Delegates

**Article VIII***Finance .*

1. All moneys received shall be held in deposit by the Treasurer at a Scheduled Bank, in the name of the A I W C
2. Cheques shall be signed by any two of the following Office-Bearers, President, Treasurer, and General Secretary
3. Each Branch shall send annually to the Treasurer, before July the 1st, a minimum affiliation fee of Rs 25

**Article IX***I. Bye Laws*

1. The Standing Committee shall have power to make Bye-Laws and Regulations for carrying out the work of the A -I W C and to alter them and add to them from time to time as occasion may require
2. These Bye-Laws and Regulations may not be altered or added to except by the Standing Committee, at one of its meetings, by a two-thirds majority of the members present, and provided that:—

(a) notice of such proposed alteration or addition shall have been sent in writing by registered post, to every member of the Standing Committee at least three months before the meeting, and

(b) the Bye-Law in question has been in existence for at least a year

## II *Alteration of Constitution*

The Constitution of the A.I.W.C. may not be altered except at a Conference Session by a two-thirds majority of the members present, provided that a notice of such proposed alteration shall have been sent in writing by registered post or under certificate of posting to every member of Standing Committee at least three months before the Conference.

### BYE-LAWS ( A I W C )

#### I

#### The Central Office

##### *Bye-Law* *No*

- (1) There shall be a Central Office of the A.I.W.C. in a town selected by the Standing Committee

*Note* —Until such time as the Central Office Scheme materialises, the office shall be where the General Secretary reside.

- (2) The Staff of the Central Office shall consist of —

- (i) The General Secretary in Charge
- (ii) The Organising Secretary
- (iii) The Personal Assistant to the General Secretary

- (3) *Publications* —The Central Office shall be responsible for the proper publication and distribution of —

- 1 A full report of each Conference Session
- 2 A duly edited volume of reports annually of work done by all the Branches as well as important information collected by them or by Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects and Conveners of Sub-Committees
- 3 A short sketch of the History of the A I W C together with a Memorandum of important resolutions passed at previous Conferences, the Constitution and Bye-Laws of the A.I.W.C. and other relevant matters brought up-to-date each year

- (4) *Library* —There shall be a Reference Library of the A.I.W.C. housing all reports journals and file-information received at the Central Office

*Bye-Law**No.*

- (5) *Records*:—Copies of the A I W C, records shall be available to Standing Committee Members, from the Central Office, on a written application to the General Secretary

Any of the original records shall be open to inspection by the Standing Committee Members, at one of its meetings, provided due notice has been received by the General Secretary

- (6) *Circulars, Minutes, etc* :—

1 (a) *Branch Representatives* (S C M) shall receive from the Central Office, the circulars, minutes and other official literature, on payment of the full Branch-subscription for the year

(b) On payment of Rs 10, three extra sets of the circulars, minutes, etc, may be obtained by a Branch Representative (S C M) in order to facilitate the work of her Branch

(c) All Constituent-Branches shall be entitled to receive, for information only, circulars and other literature from the Head Office of the A I W C, on payment of Rs 7 for one set or Rs 10 for three sets, annually to the Honorary Treasurer, A I. W C

2 *Standing Committee Members*, other than the Secretaries and Branch Representatives, shall pay a subscription of Rs 3 for the circulars, minutes and other official literature received by them from the Central Office for the current year

3 *Patrons and Ex-Office Bearers*, who are not members of Standing Committee for the year, shall be entitled to receive the circulars and minutes on a payment of Rs 10

## II

**Appointments**

- (7) All paid officers and workers of the A I W C shall be appointed by the Standing Committee and be responsible to it

## III

**Elections**

- (8) *Rules of Election* —

1 Elections shall be conducted by ballot

2. The election of all Office-Bearers excluding the President, shall be held at the time and place of each Conference Session

*Bye-Law*  
*No*

3 No one shall be eligible to stand for an office of the A.I.W.O. except that of the President, unless she has already served on the Standing Committee for at least one year

4 Nominations not in conformity with the following rules shall be considered invalid —

(a) The Names of members eligible to stand for election shall be duly proposed and seconded by those qualified to nominate and shall be sent in writing to the General Secretary within the time specified

(b) All nominations except those for the office of the Presidents shall bear the written consent of the nominees

5 Once a nominee has given her consent for election to any office other than the Presidentship she shall not withdraw without the consent of the Executive Committee

(9) *Election of Office-Bearers —*

1 *President —*

(a) Every member of the Standing Committee shall be entitled to send in one nomination for the Presidentship. Such nomination shall reach the General Secretary within three months after the last session of the A.I.W.O. Conference

The General Secretary before circulating the nominations received for the Presidentship should ascertain whether the nominees are willing to stand for election or not and mention the names of nominees who have withdrawn from the election

(b) Nominees for the Presidentship wishing to withdraw their names shall inform the General Secretary to that effect within three weeks of the complete list of nominations being sent to them by the Central Office

A candidate wishing to withdraw her name after the specified time shall communicate her reasons immediately to the Chairwoman who shall consult the Executive Committee on the matter

(c) Voting papers with the nominations mentioned in alphabetical order shall be sent to all Standing Committee Members who shall then forward their votes, by registered post so as to reach the General Secretary at least a fortnight before the date of the Half yearly Meeting of the Standing Committee.

*Note*—Nominations and voting papers not in accordance with Rules (a) and (c) above shall be considered invalid.

*Bye-Law*  
*No.*

2. *Chairwoman*.—The Chairwoman, when elected to act for any President who does not desire to fill the office, shall be nominated and elected by members of the Standing Committee, from among the Patrons ( S C M ), Vice-Presidents and Ex-Vice-Presidents immediately after the session of the Conference.

3 *Vice-Presidents* —Vice-Presidents shall be nominated by the members of the Standing Committee and elected by the General Body No one shall be eligible to stand for a Vice-Presidentship for more than four consecutive years

4 *Secretaries* —When the General Secretary or the Organising Secretary is Honorary, she shall be nominated and elected by the General Body.

5 *Treasurer* —The Honorary Treasurer shall be nominated and elected by the General Body of the Conference

( 10 ) *Election of other Standing Committee Members :—*

1. *Patrons ( S C M )* :—Nine patrons shall be elected to the new Standing Committee by the General Body

2 *Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects* —Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects shall, as required, be elected annually by the new Standing Committee from among past or present members of the Standing Committee Should the person selected be from among past members of the Standing Committee, she shall first be co-opted to the Standing Committee as an Ordinary Member

3 *Branch Representative* :—( S C M ) shall be nominated and elected by their respective Branches in accordance with their constitutions

4 *Liaison Officers* —

( a ) Liaison Officers for organizations abroad and those appointed to act as Liaison Officers between the A I W C and other organizations, shall be nominated and elected by, and from among, the members of the Standing Committee

( b ) Liaison Officers representing other Bodies on the Standing Committee of the A.I.W.C shall be appointed by the Committees of their respective organizations

5 *Conveners of Sub-Committees* shall be nominated and elected by, and from among, the members of the Standing Committee.

IV  
COMMITTEES  
The Executive Committee

- 11) An Executive Committee shall be appointed annually by the Standing Committee to administer the affairs of the A I W O within the terms defined.
- 12) *Composition* —The Executive Committee shall consist of —  
*Ex-Officio* —  
(a) The Chairwoman.  
(b) The Honorary General Secretary  
(c) The Honorary Treasurer  
(d) The Member-in-Charge of Constitution.  
*Elected by and from among members of the Standing Committee* —  
(e) Not more than two Patrons (S O M )  
(f) Not more than two Vice-Presidents.  
(g) Six other members of whom not less than four shall be Branch Representatives (S C M ).
- (13) *Quorum* —The Quorum of the Executive Committee shall be seven members
- (14) *Powers—Invitations* —The Committee shall be empowered in exceptional circumstances to invite Special Delegates and Special Visitors to a Conference Session
- (15) *Duties* —*The Executive Committee shall among other things* —  
1 Ratify Constitutions of Branches and Constituent Branches as submitted through the Constitution Member  
2. Recommend for inclusion in the Conference agenda, any from among urgent and important resolutions apart from those sent in by the Branches or those drafted by members of the Standing Committee other than Branch Representatives  
3 Decide any other matters referred to it by the Standing Committee or urgent matters referred to it by the Chairwoman
- The Standing Committee
- (16) The Standing Committee shall administer the affairs of the A.I.W.O and decide questions affecting its policy subject to the Constitution and shall carry out any general or special instructions that may be issued by the General Body

*Bye-Laws*  
*No.*

( 17 ) *Business —*

1 The business of the Standing Committee shall be carried out through :—

( a ) Meetings

( b ) Circulars

( c ) The Executive Committee, within the terms defined

2 At every annual meeting of the Standing Committee, there shall be presented.—

( a ) The report of the General Secretary for the year

( b ) A duly audited Balance Sheet, by the Honorary Treasurer

( c ) The Organising Secretary's report for the year

( d ) Reports of the Fund Association and Lady Irwin College, by the Secretary of the Fund Association

( e ) Reports of their work by —

( i ) Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects

( ii ) Conveners of Sub-Committees ( if any )

( 18 ) *Quorum —*The Quorum of the Standing Committee shall include at least four Branch Representatives ( S C M ), and shall be one-sixth of the total number of members on that Committee

( 19 ) *Powers —*The Standing Committee shall, among other things, have power to —

1 Co-opt, subject to Article III ( C ) of the Constitution

( a ) Ordinary Members :—

( b ) Extraordinary Members

( i ) Experts on any subject

( ii ) Representatives of other All-India Women's Organizations, on a reciprocal basis

2 Appoint from among the members of the Standing Committee, as many assistant secretaries as may be required from time to time

3 Appoint Sub-Committees and *Ad Hoc* Committees.

4 Appoint one or more of its members to represent the A I W C. on any other Body or at any meeting inviting it to do so

5 Appoint Delegations in response to invitations from abroad or for any special purpose



*Bye-Law*  
*No*

6 Decide the question of affiliation of the A.I.W.C. to any International Women's Organization

7 Invite Special Delegates and Special Visitors to attend a Conference Session

8 Refer urgent matters to the Executive Committee, within the terms defined.

(20) *Duties :—*

At its first meeting held after the Conference the Standing Committee shall select special subjects for study research or practical work. Such subjects shall be under the care of Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects appointed in accordance with the rules of election.

The powers and terms of reference of such members shall be clearly defined by the Standing Committee at the time of their appointment

(21) *Meetings —*

1 Ordinary Meetings of the Standing Committee shall be convened at least twice a year a Half yearly Meeting and the Annual Meeting at a time and place selected by the Standing Committee

2 Extraordinary Meetings of the Standing Committee shall be called on the written requisition of at least two-thirds of the total number of members on the Standing Committee

(22) *Agenda :—*

1 All items for the Agenda shall be sent so as to reach the General Secretary at least four weeks before the date of meeting

2 The Agenda shall be sent, by the General Secretary to all members of the Standing Committee and others entitled to receive it at least a fortnight before the meeting

(23) *Minutes —*

The Minutes of the Standing Committee Meetings shall be recorded by the General Secretary

A copy of the Minutes shall be posted to every member of the Standing Committee and others entitled to receive it.

(24) *Decisions :—*

1 Important decisions taken by the Standing Committee shall be in the form of resolutions duly proposed and seconded.

*Bye Law*  
*No.*

2 Important proposals for decision by circulation shall be sent under postal certificate to every member of the Standing Committee. The decision shall be declared according to the majority of replies received from at least one-half of the total number of members on the Committee within the period fixed for the purpose. Should the requisite number of replies be not received, or should the majority of replies received show any objection to the matter being decided by circulation, the question shall be laid before the Standing Committee at its next meeting.

Urgent business not conflicting with the general policy of the A I W C shall be referred for decision to the Executive Committee.

(25) *Attendance —*

1 *Chair* —In the absence of the Chairwoman, the Chair shall be taken by some one elected by, and from among, the members present at the meeting. The order of selection shall be as follows :—

Patrons ( S C M )

Vice-Presidents

Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects

Liaison Officers, subject to the rules

Branch Representatives

Other members entitled to the vote

2 *The General Secretary* :—If the General Secretary is unable to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee, she shall, in consultation with the Chairwoman, delegate her duties, *pro tem*, to some other member of the Standing Committee, preferably an Ex-Secretary.

3 *The Honorary Treasurer* —Should the Honorary Treasurer be unable to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee, she shall delegate her powers, *pro tem*, to the General Secretary or to some other responsible member of the Standing Committee, preferably an Ex-Treasurer.

4 *Branch Representatives* —In case a Branch Representative is not able to attend a meeting of the Standing Committee, the Local Committee of her Branch shall authorise her to send a substitute whose name shall be notified to the General Secretary at least a week before the meeting.

**Subjects Committee**

(26) The need or otherwise of calling a Subjects Committee for the forthcoming session of the A I W C Conference shall be annually decided by the Standing Committee at its Half-yearly Meeting. In case no Subjects Committee is formed, the Standing Committee shall be summoned to function in its stead.

*Bye-Law*  
*No*

(27) The Subjects Committee, subject to *Bye Law No 26*, shall consist of:—

- (i) All Members of the Standing Committee for the year
- (ii) Branch Representatives as elected to serve on the new Standing Committee for the ensuing year

*Note*—In the event of any present Branch Representative having been re-elected for ensuing year the Branch Committee shall appoint one of its delegates as Second Subjects Committee Member

(28) The Subjects Committee shall meet before the session of the Conference and may further be summoned during the session, if required

(29) The Subjects Committee shall examine and draft the final form of the resolutions to be brought up for discussion at the Conference. It may resolve itself into sub-committees for this purpose and may refer on points to the Standing or Executive Committee

The Subjects Committee may limit the number of resolutions so as to facilitate fuller discussion and suggestions of practical importance

(30) *Sub-Committee* —

1 The period of life of a Sub-Committee appointed to carry out the work of the A.I.W.C. shall be one year. The Sub-Committee may be re-appointed if required

2 *Ad Hoc* Committee may be appointed to deal with problems that arise from time to time. Conveners of these may be co-opted as Extraordinary Members of the Standing Committee, if desired

(31) Conveners of Sub-Committees shall have power to co-opt upto three additional members who shall have specialised in the subject dealt with by the Sub-Committee

(32) The Chairwoman and General Secretary shall be *ex-officio* members of all Sub-Committees.

## V

### Vacancies

(33) *Vacancies Occurring between the Elections* —

1 Among the Office-Bearers shall subject to the rules be filled by the Executive Committee from among past or present Members of the Standing Committee.

2 Among Members of the Executive Committee shall be filled by that Committee subject to the rules from among Members of the Standing Committee

*Bye-Law*  
*No.*

3 Among Members of the Standing Committee other than the Office Bearers, Branch Representatives or representatives of the other organisations shall be filled by the Standing Committee

4. Among Branch Representative (S C M) or representatives of other organisations shall be filled by the Branch or organisation in question

5 On a Sub-Committee shall be filled by the Convener from among Members of the Standing Committee

(34) *Paid Officers and Workers* —Any vacancy among Paid Officers and Workers of the A I W C shall be filled by the Standing Committee.

## VI

### Duties

(35) *General* —*All Members of the Standing Committee shall :—*

(a) Be conversant with the Constitution, Bye-Laws, and Regulations and modes of procedure of the A I W C, and shall be responsible to the Standing Committee for the efficient discharge of their official duties

(b) Whenever possible, tour in their respective areas on behalf of the A I W C In the case of a Branch Representative (S C M) this duty may be relegated by her local committee, to some other person

(c) Make it a point of attending all meetings of the Standing Committee held during the year Reasons for unavoidable absence must be communicated, without delay, to the General Secretary

(36) *The Chairwoman* shall be responsible for the proper conduct and order of all meetings at which she presides

(37) *Patrons (S C M) and Vice-Presidents* shall fulfil any special duties deputed to them by the Standing Committee, and shall co-operate with the Chairwoman and members of the Standing Committee in matters affecting the welfare of the A I W C

(38) *The General Secretary* shall :—

1. Be in charge of the Central Office and carry out such other duties as may be decided on by the Standing Committee from time to time.

2 Issue circulars to the Standing Committee Members at least once in every two months A summary of the information received in answer to such circulars, together with other relevant matter in regard to the progress of work, shall be issued by her for information of the Executive Committee from time to time

*Bye-Law*  
*No*

3 Circulate, as soon as possible after receiving it, any information which a Standing Committee Member may send to her for that purpose within four weeks before the Half yearly Meeting or within six weeks before a Conference-Session Meeting of the Standing Committee Urgent matters may be attended to at the discretion of the General Secretary

4 Arrange for Railway Concessions for all the Office-Bearers Standing Committee Members and Delegates attending the meetings or Conferences of the A I W C

5 Convene the meetings of the Standing Committee

(39) *The Organising Secretary* shall as directed by the Standing Committee assist in the formation, organisation, and development of the Branches and Sub-Branchees of the A I W C in various areas of the country She shall also assist the General Secretary in the work of the Central Office and shall carry out any other instructions that may be issued by the Standing Committee from time to time.

(40) *The Honorary Treasurer* shall be responsible for (a) the collection and distribution of all moneys and for the proper maintenance of accounts pertaining to the A.I.W.C (b) the framing and presentation of a Draft Budget at the first meeting of the New Standing Committee

(41) *Duties of Branch Representatives (S C M) —*

1 A Branch Representative (S O M) shall be one of the Secretaries of the Branch Association and must be resident in the area in which the headquarters of the Branch happen to be

2 The Branch Representative (S O M) shall be the Liaison Officer between the Branch and the Standing Committee of the A.I.W.C She shall present the views of her Branch on all important issues arising for discussion at meetings of the Standing Committee, and shall attend to all A I W C circulars and correspondence in consultation with her local committee.

3 The Branch Representative (S O M) shall be responsible for carrying out the work suggested in the annual time-table of the A.I.W.C She shall forward to the General Secretary —

(a) Three weeks before the Half yearly Meeting of the Standing Committee a six monthly report of the work done by her Branch and items for the agenda of the Standing Committee Meeting

*Bye-Law*  
*No.*

(b) Six weeks before the Conference Session, a copy of all resolutions passed by the Branch Conference, duly classified, and items for the agenda of the Standing Committee Meeting

(c) Four weeks before the Conference Session :—

(i) The names of the Branch Delegates and Ordinary Visitors attending the All-India Women's Conference

(ii) The name of the Branch Representative ( S C M ) as elected for the ensuing year

(iii) The name of a Second Subjects Committee Member *in case* she herself has been re-elected as Branch Representative for the ensuing year

(iv) The full annual report of the Branch Association

(d) The names of any Special Delegates or Special Visitors to the A I W Conference that may be recommended by the Branch

(42) *Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects and Conveners of Sub-Committees shall :—*

(a) Within their terms of reference, collect and disseminate information, do propaganda work, file relevant press-cuttings, and keep in touch with other members dealing with similar subjects in the Branches

(b) Keep the Central Office in close touch with their work and, as far as possible, posted up-to-date in regard to any legislation, dealing with their special subjects, which has been introduced, or is pending, in the Legislature

(c) Forward detailed six-monthly and annual reports, one at the time of the Half-yearly Meeting of the Standing Committee and the other at the time of the Conference

(43) 1 *The Liaison Officers* for organizations abroad shall regularly send to the Chairwoman and the General Secretary A I W C important extracts from their correspondence

2 *Liaison Members* between the A I W C and other organisations shall represent the views of the A I W C at committee meetings of the bodies to which they have been elected and shall be responsible for supplying the Standing Committee of the A.I.W.C, with all information required,

## VII

## The A.I.W.C. Session

(44) *Invitation —*

Any Branch wishing to invite either the A.I.W.C. to hold its Conference or the Standing Committee to hold one of its meetings within the Branch area shall extend a formal invitation through the Branch Representative (S.O.M.) to the Chairwoman of the Standing Committee.

(45) *The Reception Committee —*

1 A Reception Committee of women shall be organised by the Branch Representative (S.O.M.) as soon as possible after the invitation to hold the Conference Session in her Branch area has been accepted by the A.I.W.C.

2 The Reception Committee of the Conference Session shall *pro tem* be deemed to be a separate unit and, as such shall be entitled to elect five delegates from among its members. The other members of the Reception Committee may attend the Conference as Special Visitors.

3 The entire amount of Delegates fees shall be credited to the account of the A.I.W.C. Association.

4 Half the proceeds of the Variety Entertainment organised by the Reception Committee plus half the surplus of the money collected by the Reception Committee for the Conference Session, after the expenses are paid shall be handed over to the A.I.W.C. Fund.

(46) *Programme —*

After a formal discussion of the provisional programme by the Standing Committee at its Half Yearly Meeting the General Secretary shall be responsible for drawing up the final programme of the Conference Session, in consultation with the Chairwoman of the A.I.W.C. and the Branch Representative (S.O.M.) of the place where the session is to be held.

(47) *Delegates to the All India Women's Conference shall be —*

(a) All Members of the Standing Committee

(b) *Special Delegates —*

(i) Patrons who are not members of the Standing Committee for the year

(ii) Those invited to attend as Special Delegates.

*Bye-Law*  
*No.*

(c) *Ordinary Delegates* —

(1) A.I W C Branch Delegates.

(11) Five Reception Committee Delegates.

(48) *Special Delegates* shall have all the rights of Ordinary Delegates, and shall further be entitled to attend, by invitation of the Standing Committee, any of the other meetings of the A I W C held during the Conference Session. At such meetings, they shall not, except by permission of the Chair, participate in the discussions, they shall not, in any case, vote at such meetings

(49) *Visitors* —

1 Special Visitors may, by permission of the Chair, speak during the open discussion of the Conference, but shall not have the right to vote

2 Ordinary Visitors may attend the Conference meetings, but shall not be entitled either to speak or vote

(50) *Resolutions* —

1 Only those resolutions which are passed at the Branch Conferences or are drafted by Standing Committee Members other than Branch Representatives, and which are duly forwarded to the General Secretary shall be considered for inclusion in the agenda of the A I W C Conference. Exceptions may be made by advice of the Executive Committee, in the case of important or urgent resolutions

All such resolutions shall be subject to alteration, revision or rejection by the Subjects Committee (or by the Standing Committee, if no Subjects Committee has been called for that session)

2 Resolutions for the agenda of the A I W C Conference shall reach the General Secretary not later than six weeks before the date of the Conference. They shall be sent duly classified according to the subject-matter, and should be marked as follows. —

(a) "Urgent" (such as those relating to Bills pending in Legislatures)

(b) \*\* (those of special importance, because of their All-India application)

(c) † (local resolution for which the backing of the A I W C. Conference is needed)

3 Copies of all resolutions, properly classified, shall be issued by the General Secretary to the members of the Standing Committee and to all others attending the Conference as Delegates.



*Bye-Law**No*(51) *Amendments —*

1 Amendments to the original resolutions may be moved by members of the Subjects Committee during any of its sittings.

2 Amendments to the resolutions as placed on the agenda of the Conference may be proposed by any delegate. Such amendments shall be given to the General Secretary in writing one day before the Conference Sitting at which the resolution is due to be moved.

A delegate wishing to propose an amendment to an amendment during a sessional sitting of the Conference shall send it up in writing to the Chair.

(52) *Business —*At every session of the All India Women's Conference there shall be presented —

(a) A report of the A I W C work done since the previous Conference (General Secretary)

(b) A duly audited Balance Sheet (Honorary Treasurer)

(c) Resumes of the Branch Reports (Branch Representatives)

(d) Reports from Members-in Charge of Special Subjects

(e) Sub-Committee reports, if any (Conveners)

(f) Brief reports of the A I W C Fund Association and the Lady Irwin College (Honorary Secretary Fund Association)

(53) *Procedure —*

1 *Language*:—At sessional sittings of the Conference the speeches shall as far as possible be in Hindustani. At the discretion of the Chair important speeches may be translated into the language of the area into which the Conference is held.

2 *Time and Conduct*:—The amount of time to be allowed to such speaker and the conduct of the proceedings shall be left to the discretion of the President, subject to the rules of procedure followed by the Indian Central Legislature modified where necessary by the Standing Committee.

## VIII

*Patrons*

- (54) Patrons who are not members of the Standing Committee for the year shall be entitled to attend the Conference Sessions as Special Delegates. They may also participate but without power to vote in all other meetings of the A I W C.

*Bye-Law*  
*No*

## IX

### Co-opted Members

- (55) 1 *Ordinary Co-opted Members* shall have the full rights of Standing Committee Members
- 2 *Extraordinary Co-opted Members* :—
- (a) Representatives of other organisations on the Standing Committee
- (b) Those co-opted for special purposes or for stated periods of time only
- Extraordinary members shall not have the right to vote except as delegates

## X

### Journals

- (56) A journal shall be regularly published in the name of the All-India Women's Conference, in accordance with directions issued from time to time by the Standing Committee.

## XI

### Publicity

- (57) 1 Proper publicity arrangements shall be made by the Reception Committee at the time and place of a Conference Session. The General Secretary ( A I W C ) and others appointed by the Standing Committee to assist her, shall fully co-operate with the Reception Committee in this matter.
- 2 *Statements* :—No statement on behalf of the A I. W C shall be released for publication, unless it has the approval and signature of the Chairwoman

## XII

### All-India Women's Education Fund Association

#### A I W. C.

- (58) 1. *A I W C Liaison Officer* — The Standing Committee shall appoint, from among the twelve elected members on the Governing body of the A I W C Fund Association, one to act as the Liaison Officer between the A I. W C and the Lady Irwin College. Such member shall represent the views of the A I W C at meetings of the Fund

*Bye-Law*  
*No*

Association and shall keep herself up-to-date in matters pertaining to the College

2 *Rules for Election* — The rules for election to the Governing Body of the A.I.W.C. Fund Association shall be published along with the Constitution and Bye-Laws of the All India Women's Conference Association

### XIII

#### Finance

- (59) 1 *Reserve Fund* — All donations shall be credited to a Reserve Fund of the Association of the All India Women's Conference
- 2 *The Financial Year* of the A.I.W.C. shall be from the 1st of November to October the 31st.
- 3 *Balance Sheet and Donors* — The Annual Balance Sheet, as ratified by the Standing Committee and the names of all Donors paying Rs 10 or more for the current year shall be printed in the annual Report of the A.I.W.C.
- 4 *Affiliation and Registration Fees* shall be sent to the Honorary Treasurer A.I.W.C. before the Half yearly Meeting of the Standing Committee of that year
- 5 *Delegates Fees* — Each delegate to the A.I.W. Conference shall pay a fee of Rs 10 to the Honorary Treasurer
- 6 *Standing Committee Members* — Members-in-Charge of Special Subjects Liaison Officers and Conveners of Sub-Committees (if any) shall be allotted certain sums to be determined by the Standing Committee for their expenses. Any further expenditure incurred by these members shall require the sanction of the Executive Committee
- 7 *Paid Officers and Workers* — The salaries increase or decrease in salaries and the allowances (if any) of all paid officers and workers of the A.I.W.C. shall be decided on by the Standing Committee

### XIV

#### The A. I. W. C. Constitution and Bye-Laws

( Vide Article No. IX )

- (60) 1 All proposals of alteration to the Articles Bye-Laws and Regulations of the A.I.W.C. shall be stated in the exact form in which the alteration is desired to be effected and copies shall be forwarded to the General Secretary and the Constitution Member by registered post

2. All proposals of alteration to the—

(1) *Articles* must reach the General Secretary at least four months before the date of the Conference Session

(2) *Bye-Laws and Regulations* must reach the General Secretary at least four months prior to the Half-yearly Meeting or the Conference Session meeting of the Standing Committee

### THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S EDUCATION FUND ASSOCIATION

(As the All-India Women's Conference is strongly represented on the Governing Body of the All-India Women's Education Fund Association, which came into existence through the Conference after its first Delhi Session, it recommends this Fund to all those interested in the development of girls' education along the lines of its Memorandum).

#### Memorandum of Association

1 The name of the Association is "The All-India Women's Education Fund Association"

2 The objects for which the Association is established are.—

(1) The management of the Fund known as "The All-India Women's Education Fund"

(2) The promotion of the education of women and girls of India including:—

(a) The aid of any schemes for the furtherance of education in all its branches, of the women and girls of India as may from time to time be recommended by the Conference known as the All-India Women's Conference or under such other names as the Conference may hereafter be registered (hereinafter and in the Rules and Regulations of the Association referred to as the All-India Women's Conference)

(b) The institution of propaganda for the education of the women and girls of India

(c) The increase of the supply of better trained teachers, having particular regard to the inclusion of training in domestic subjects

(d) The encouragement of the production of better text-books and attractive and suitable literature in the vernacular

(e) The exploration and initiation of schemes for the education of children of Kindergarten age, for the extension of suitable education amongst children in rural areas, for the support where

possible of approved schemes which already exist, and for the provision of suitable housing accommodation for women teachers, especially in rural areas.

(f) The extension of facilities in existing educational institutions for courses of training in home-craft, fine arts domestic science physical culture and other suitable subjects

(3) The purchase or acquisition on lease or in exchange, or on hire or otherwise of any real or personal property and any rights or privileges necessary or convenient for the purpose of the Association.

(4) The erection construction alteration and maintenance of any buildings necessary or convenient for the purpose of the Association

(5) The sale improvement management and development of all or any part of the property of the Association

(6) The promotion and establishment of branches and of other societies or associations with similar objects particularly in the constituent areas of the All India Women's Conference and the affiliation or amalgamation of such societies or associations with this Association.

(7) The doing of all other such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

### I Membership

1 There shall be the following grades of members of the Association:—

(a) President (b) Patrons (c) Vice-Patrons (d) Life Fellows  
(e) Life Members. (f) Members.

2 The President shall be elected at a General Meeting for a period of three years

3 The Patrons of the Association shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to not less than Rs 20 000 and such other distinguished persons as the Governing Body may think proper to appoint. Every patron shall be at liberty to appoint a representative to attend and vote at the General Meetings of the Association on his or her behalf

4 Vice-Patrons shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to Rs 10 000 Life Fellows shall be donors of sums amounting in the aggregate to Rs 500 Life Members shall be donors of sums of not less than Rs 100

5 Members shall be persons who pay an annual subscription of not less than Rs. 5 such subscription shall be due in advance on the 1st November in every year

6 The Governing Body may elect any person to honorary membership of any grade in recognition of services rendered to the Association.

7. The Honorary Secretary of the Association shall maintain a register of members of the Association and this register shall be open to inspection

## II. General Meeting

8 (a) The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held once a year at Delhi, at an interval of not less than 10 and not more than 15 months. The Executive Committee, however, shall have power to alter the venue for any special reasons (Notice of such Annual General Meetings shall be given at least one month before the date fixed and such notice shall specify the business to be transacted. Members of all grades shall be entitled to attend and to vote on question that may be submitted to the meeting for determination)

(b) At such Annual General Meeting the report and balance sheet for the past year, and the budget for the next year, shall be presented and an Auditor appointed for auditing the account of the next year. Any other business may be brought forward with the assent of the Chair

9 (a) An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association may be convened at any time by the President for any purpose connected with the Association and shall be convened on the written requisition of at least 30 members stating the object of such meeting

(b) At least 18 days' notice shall be given of such meeting, with the agenda to be brought before it, provided that accidental omission to give such notice to any member shall not invalidate any Resolution passed at such meeting, and no business other than that specified in such agenda shall be transacted

10 (a) All General Meetings of the Association shall be presided over by the President or in her absence by the Chairwoman of the Governing Body, or in absence of both by some other person elected by those present

(b) All questions shall be decided by the votes of the members present, taken by show of hands, but anyone present may demand a division which shall forthwith be taken and the result declared by the officer presiding

(c) In case of equality of votes, the officer presiding shall have a second or casting vote

## III The Governing Body

11. (1) The Governing Body of the Association for the purpose of the Act XXI of 1860 shall consist of the President and 21 members including an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, all of whom with the exception of the Honorary Treasurer, shall be women,

(2) From and after the Annual General Meeting of 1938 the Governing Body shall consist of —

- (a) The President the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer
- (b) Nineteen members of the Association elected triennially as follows —Seven elected by the Association and 12 elected by the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference of whom 2 shall be from Indian States

(3) The members of the Governing Body shall all be members of the Fund Association

(4) Casual vacancies among office-holders or members of the Governing Body shall be filled by the Governing Body and any person so chosen shall retain his or her office so long as the vacating member would have retained the same if no vacancy had occurred. In the event of a vacancy or vacancies occurring among those members elected by the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference the Governing Body shall fill it or them from among names submitted to them by the said Standing Committee. No action of the Governing Body which may be otherwise valid shall be rendered invalid by the reason of any such vacancy remaining unfilled provided however that the number of vacancies so remaining unfilled shall not at any time exceed three. An absence of 12 months out of India shall constitute a vacancy.

(5) The Governing Body shall have power when necessary to co-opt persons having expert knowledge in any Branch of the Association's work. The number of persons so co-opted shall not at any one time exceed five. Any co-optation shall cease at the will of the Governing Body.

12 The Governing Body shall hold their Annual Meeting on the same day and at the same place as and immediately after the Annual General Meeting of the Association or at such other place and time as the Executive Committee may decide. The Governing Body shall at the Annual Meeting elect from among themselves a Chairwoman who will preside in the absence of the President and a Vice-Chairwoman who in the absence of the Chairwoman shall conduct her duties and exercise her powers. In the absence of both at any meeting such meeting may elect its own Chairwoman from those present. Any vacancies in these offices shall be filled up by the Governing Body.

13 Ordinary meetings of the Governing Body shall be held at such place and time as may be fixed by the Executive Committee. The annual budget and report of the Association shall be considered at one such meeting in each year.

14 An extraordinary meeting of the Governing Body may be called at any time by the President or Chairwoman.

15 Upon a requisition in writing made by any five members of the Governing Body stating the object, the President or Chairwoman shall call an extraordinary meeting

16 Eighteen day's clear notice of any meeting of the Governing Body, specifying the place, day, and hour of the meeting and general nature of the business to be transacted shall be given to every member of the Governing Body by notice sent under postal certificate, provided that the failure to give such notice to any of the members shall not invalidate any resolution at such meeting

17 At a meeting of the Governing Body six members must be present in person to form a quorum

18 If no quorum is present within an hour of the time fixed for a meeting of the Governing Body, the meeting shall be held after an interval of 24 hours. If there again be no quorum, only urgent business may be transacted, and at such meeting three members shall form a quorum.

19 In the event of an equality of votes at any meeting, the presiding officer shall have a second or casting vote

20 (1) The Governing Body shall at their annual meeting, elect the Honorary Secretary and the Honorary Treasurer. They may also appoint an Honorary Assistant Secretary and an Honorary Assistant Treasurer. These shall not, ex-officio, be members of the Governing Body, but in the event of the absence from any meeting of the Secretary or Treasurer, they shall act in their respective offices as members of the Governing Body. Persons holding these offices shall be eligible for re-election. Any vacancies in these offices occurring during the year shall be filled up by the Governing Body.

(2) All other appointments shall be made by the Executive Committee

21. The Governing Body, subject to these Rules, shall have general control of the affairs of the Association with authority to make standing orders regulating its own procedure, the procedure of the Executive Committee, and the powers and duties of its officers. In particular, it shall provide for a proper record of all proceedings, and for an accurate account of all receipts and payments to be opened to the inspection of the auditor

22 In addition to the powers and authorities conferred on them either by Statute or Rules of the Association, the Governing Body shall have power to do all such acts as are to be done by the Association, with the exception of those which by these Rules or by Statute are expressly directed to be done by the Association in General Meetings.



## IV Committees

23 The Governing Body shall at their annual meeting elect an Executive Committee of eight members besides the office-bearers. Any vacancies in the elected members of the Executive Committee occurring during the year shall be filled by the Executive Committee.

This Executive Committee will perform the current duties of the Association and such other duties as the Governing Body may prescribe. The transactions of the Executive Committee shall be duly recorded and laid before the Governing Body at its next meeting for information or confirmation. In case of emergency the Executive Committee may perform any duty and exercise any power of the Governing Body. The Executive Committee may appoint any sub-committee and delegate to it any powers which may be necessary but the proceedings of such sub-committees shall in every case be reported for information or confirmation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall meet at such time and in such places as they think proper and at all their meetings four shall form a quorum.

24 The Chairwoman Vice-Chairwoman Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. The Honorary Secretary shall be ex-officio member of all sub-committees (In the absence of either Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer their Assistants if any will act as members of the Executive Committee and any of the Sub-Committees).

25 (1) All matters affecting the finance of the Association shall be referred to the Executive Committee before being determined by the Governing Body.

(2) The Executive Committee shall scrutinise the accounts of the Association and shall consider the report of the Auditor. It shall also prepare the annual budget and submit it through the Governing Body to the General Meeting of the Association.

26 When a Branch of the Association is formed, or any other body having for its objects the purposes for which the Association is established desires affiliation the case shall be examined by the Executive Committee before being submitted to the Governing Body and no such branch shall be recognised or body affiliated without the vote of the Governing Body. It shall be a condition of recognition or affiliation that each such branch or body shall have a regularly constituted committee, and shall pay an annual affiliation fee to be fixed by the Governing Body and that its accounts be audited by an auditor approved by the Governing Body.

27 Unless otherwise desired by them branches and affiliated bodies shall remain independent in the administration of their funds and in the

conduct of their operations, but they shall furnish to the Governing Body such reports and information as may be required by the Governing Body and shall assist by correspondence and conference in the furtherance of their common objects. The Governing Body shall have power, subject to the Rules to assist branches and affiliated bodies in such manner and to such an extent as it may consider to be conducive to the objects of the Association

28. The Governing Body shall be at liberty to appoint sub-committees for such purposes and with such powers as they may think proper.

#### V General

29. All moneys at any time standing to the credit of the general account which shall not be required for current expenses, and which the Governing Body shall not determine to transfer to the Building or any other account, shall be invested by the Honorary Treasurer, with approval of the Executive Committee in securities authorised by law for the investment of trust funds

30. The Bankers of the Association shall be the Imperial Bank of India and also if necessary the Central Bank of India Ltd

31. The Executive Committee shall provide a seal and also provide for its safe custody, and the seal shall never be used except by the authority of the Executive Committee previously given and in the presence of two Members of the Executive Committee who shall sign every instrument to which the seal is fixed, and every such instrument shall be countersigned by the Honorary Secretary or some other person appointed by the Executive Committee

32. If any corporation, firm, school, college or body of trustees makes any subscription or donation to the Association, the privileges which such subscription or donation carries shall be exercised by a person whom the above-mentioned may from time to time nominate for a period not exceeding ten years to be determined by the Governing Body

33 (1) None of these Rules shall be repealed or altered and no new Rules shall be made except by Resolution passed by majority of not less than three-fifths of the members of the Governing Body present at an ordinary meeting and confirmed by Resolution passed by a subsequent General Meeting of the Association

(2) Interpretation of these Rules shall be vested entirely in the Governing Body.

#### BYE-LAWS FOR THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE GOVERNING BODY

1. The Executive Committee shall conduct all elections to the Governing Body.

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(2) Interpretation of these Rules shall be vested entirely in the Governing Body.

#### BYE-LAWS FOR THE ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE GOVERNING BODY

1. The Executive Committee shall conduct all elections to the Governing Body.

2 Every candidate for election to the Governing Body shall be a member of the Association and shall be nominated by a member of the Association. Nomination forms for membership for the Governing Body shall be posted to each member of the Association in such form and at such time as the Executive Committee may think proper. No person can nominate herself or himself.

3 The nomination forms must be returned to the Honorary Secretary of the Association by the date fixed for that purpose accompanied by the consent in writing of the candidate nominated.

4 All nominations shall be scrutinised by the Executive Committee who shall have absolute discretion to reject any nominee. Notice of the names of all candidates so nominated together with voting papers in the form approved by the Executive Committee and instructions as to voting shall be posted to each member of the Association. The voting papers must be returned to the Honorary Secretary in special envelopes provided only for this purpose by the date fixed in the notice.

5 The voting papers shall be opened and scrutinised at a meeting of the Executive Committee or by the Honorary Secretary and two scrutineers appointed by the Executive Committee. The votes for candidates will be counted separately and the candidate or candidates, as the case may be, receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected. In the event of two or more candidates for one vacancy heading the poll with the same number of votes the Chairwoman of the Executive Committee shall exercise a casting vote.

6 The declaration of the Chairwoman of the Executive Committee declaring the candidates elected shall be final and shall be reported to the Association at the Annual General Meeting. Successful candidates shall be notified immediately of their election.

7 If during the interval between the posting of the nomination papers and the counting of the votes a candidate, nominated by a member of the Association is elected to the Governing Body by the Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference her name shall be removed from the voting paper.

8. The Standing Committee of the All India Women's Conference shall have power to nominate not more than *three* names for each vacancy occurring during any year in the Governing Body among its representatives. In the event of these nominations not being sent in to the Honorary Secretary of the Association within one month of the request for such nominations the Governing Body shall fill the vacancy or vacancies themselves.

9 In order to simplify elections for office-holders of the Executive Committee nominations for these should be sent in by the members of the

Governing Body to the Honorary Secretary at least *three* days before the Annual General Meeting

## HISTORY OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

### 1 *Origin of the All-India Women's Conference*

The All-India Women's Conference owes its origin to a circular letter from Mrs Margaret E Cousins who, in the autumn of 1926, as Secretary of the Women's Indian Association, Adyar, Madras, addressed an appeal to women all over the country to form local committees and hold Constituent Conferences in each of the Provinces and in certain other clearly defined districts and Indian States, for the purpose of declaring their views on problems of education

The original stimulus which gave rise to Mrs Cousin's letter was an appeal made by the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, at the Prize-Giving Function of the Bethune College, Calcutta, in which he called on Indian Women to "*tell us with one voice what they want, and keep on telling us till they get it*" Mrs A. L. Hudekoper, an Ex-Principal of the Bethune College made use of this appeal as the basis of two articles which were published in *Stri Dharma*, the monthly magazine of the Women's Indian Association, and it was after this that Mrs. Cousins took up the matter in the way just described. Her appeal met with a wide and enthusiastic response, and Conferences were held in 22 places during the months of September to December 1926, and the First All-India Women's Conference was organised to take place at Poona, where it was held from January 5th to 8th, 1927, under the distinguished Presidentship of Her Highness the Maharani Chimnabai Saheb Gaekwar of Baroda—Mrs Cousins being the first Honorary Organising Secretary. The Resolutions passed at that Conference related almost without exception to education, ranging from matters concerning Primary Schools up to those relating to College and Adult Education. The sole exception was a Resolution condemning the practice of early marriage, as it interfered with education and supporting Sir Hari Singh Gour's Age of Consent Bill, which was then about to come before the Legislative Assembly

### 2 *The Second Conference.*

In 1928, the Second Conference was held in Delhi under the Presidentship of Her Highness the Begum Mother of Bhopal, the proceedings being opened by Her Excellency Lady Irwin (Lady Halifax). In addition to reaffirming most of the Resolutions of the First Conference, notable Resolutions were passed relating to Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarda's Bill for the restraint of Early Marriage, which was at that time under consideration, as well as urging the Government to give representation to women in the Central Legislature, so that they might be able to express their views on pending measures affecting the interests of

women and girls. The Second Conference was noteworthy also for the origin of All India Fund for Women's Education

### 3 The Third Conference

The Third Conference that of 1929 was held at Patna, with Her Highness the Dowager Rani of Mandi as President. It was on this occasion that the scope of the Conference was definitely widened to include Social Reform and a separate Section for Social Reform was created to work on lines parallel to those of the Section concerned with Educational Reform. Committees were appointed to carry on work throughout the year in the following directions —

- (a) The drafting of a special curriculum for schools based on the ideals underlying the Resolution passed by the Conference.
- (b) The revising and creating of new text books
- (c) The investigation of the conditions of the training of teachers in all parts of India. Under the Social Reform Section also a Sub-Committee was appointed to carry on the campaign to raise the age of marriage

### 4 The Fourth Conference

In 1930 the Fourth Conference was held in Bombay under the President ship of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Prominent among the list of reforms effected through the support of the Conference and its members was the passing of the Sarda Act. Following up that success the Social Reform Section of the Conference took a very active part in the agitation for Reform of the Laws of Inheritance as affecting women. A new field of work that in connection with Woman Labour was opened up through the opportunity of giving evidence before the Labour Commission while by the delegation of distinguished members to International Conferences such as the Berlin International Congress of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship the work of the Conference became known to women of other countries and *vice-versa*.

It was in 1930 that the Committee of the Education Fund which had been registered the year before as the All India Women's Education Fund Association, decided to make a full inquiry about a suitable education for girls. An All India Committee was appointed to investigate this matter. The members of the Committee made inquiries in their own Provinces at first and then met together at Pachmarhi C P. in July and made their Report.

### 5 The Fifth Conference

The Fifth Conference was held at Lahore in 1931 with Dr (Mrs.) Muthu lakshmi Reddi as President. The institution of the observance of March 1st as "Women's Day" and the holding of meetings in almost all the Branches on that day to popularise and explain the work of the Conference, was another

noteworthy innovation Vigorous and well-timed propaganda was carried on with a view to safeguard the Sarda Act from amendments designed to nullify its usefulness, work was continued, in the direction of getting the Laws of Inheritance amended, and new work was undertaken in Baroda towards getting the State to lead the way in putting on the Statute Book a Divorce Act for Hindus. The question of abolition of untouchability began to be tackled, too, in some Constituencies, notably in Madras

## 6 *The Sixth Conference*

It was in 1932, when the Conference had Madras as its vanue, and its President was Mrs. P K Ray, that it was clearly seen that although the Constitution of the Conference debarred it from taking part in *Party* Politics, it could not, if it were to perform its function of establishing women in their rightful position in the state and in society, avoid concerning itself with politics in the widest sense of the term The status of women in the new constitution of India, particularly in relation to their fundamental rights, their representation in the various bodies, and the conditions of their enfranchisement, was a matter of vital importance not only to politicians, but to the whole country: and it was overwhelmingly felt that every opportunity must be taken before the constitution was actually drawn up in detail, to impress upon those concerned in framing it, views of nearly half of those who would have to abide by it when framed To this end, in April, 1931, a representative meeting was held in Bombay, under the Presidentship of Mrs Sarojini Naidu, the outcome of which was that the All-India Women's Conference, the Women's Indian Association, and the National Council of Women in India, conjointly drew up a Memorandum to be placed before the Franchise Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference after the approval of the Branches The essential points, which it was decided to press in the Memorandum, were as follows —

- ( 1 ) Equal rights and obligations of all citizens without any bar on account of sex
- ( 2 ) No disability to attach to any citizen by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling
- ( 3 ) Adult suffrage
- ( 4 ) Women to fight elections on equal terms with men, in mixed general electorates
- ( 5 ) No reservation of seats for women as such, nor special nomination or co-option

A deputation of A I W C members also waited on His Excellency the Viceroy, in May, and presented a Memorandum demanding that women be represented at the Round Table Conference



A notable feature of this year was that for the first time a permanent contact was made with the British Women's Organisations. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was appointed as the Liaison Officer for the Conference to keep in touch with Mrs Lankester the Liaison Officer of the British Women's Organisations appointed for the same purpose. The presence of distinguished Special Visitors like Dr Maude Royden and Mrs Corbett Ashby during the Conference Session was a proof of the great interest evinced by women in the ideals and problems of each other.

#### *10 The Tenth Conference.*

The Tenth Session the first in an Indian State was held in Trivandrum in December 1935 under the Presidentship of Her Highness Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi of Travancore. Notable Visitors from U S A, China, Japan, and England were present.

It was first time that the Conference was held in an Indian State a State where the percentage of literacy amongst women is higher than in any other part of India, where the purdah system is unknown and where women have equal rights and privileges—in other words where women's rights are recognised.

The Sub-Committee on the Child Marriage Restraint Act did good work during the year. A Bulletin was issued giving the statistics of child marriage in our country. A good deal of propaganda was done during the year through the Press to create opinion in favour of amending the Sarda Act. It is a matter of pride to note that Mr B Das was given permission to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Assembly to amend the Sarda Act and most of his amendments were based on the suggestions made by the Conference.

A Sub-Committee was appointed to report on the ways and means that could be adopted for the realisation of a common language for India. Another Sub-Committee was appointed for the spread of literacy in the country.

The Liaison Group worked increasingly to press the demand of the Conference covering Franchise and did their best to educate public opinion in England. The Group also arranged busy programmes for Conference members during their stay in England. This gave them an opportunity of speaking about the Conference. Ample publicity was given in English newspapers to all they said and did on behalf of the Conference.

Funds were raised for the Quetta Earthquake Relief. Special mention must be made here of the organised help that was given by the members of Constituencies in Central Punjab, Sind, and North-West Frontier Province to the refugees in Karachi Lahore Peshawar and other places.

All efforts to alter the qualifications for franchise mentioned in the Government of India Bill were of no avail; repeated demands, representations and statements met with but little success and the Government of India Bill passed into an Act. A resolution was passed reiterating the disapproval of the Conference of the franchise qualifications, but urging on the women to use the powers granted to them by the Act, however inadequate they may be.

The Conference was fortunate in having Mrs Sanger, one of the prominent workers in the United States of America, whose vast experience and knowledge on the question of Birth Control was helpful. The Conference passed by a large majority the resolution supporting the necessity for instruction in methods of Birth Control through recognised clinics.

### 11, *The Eleventh Conference*

The Eleventh Session of the A I W C. was held at Ahmedabad in December, 1936, under the Presidentship of Mrs. M E Cousins. Overseas Visitors from England, Australia, U S A and Holland attended the A I W.C. By this time the A I.W.C took its rightful place as a representative and a fully established women's organisation in India. The year 1936 should be mentioned for the outstanding event of the year, *viz*, the opening of the State Temples of Travancore to all classes of Hindus, when H H Maharani Setu Parvati Bayi was our President. A great deal of propaganda work was carried out by our Constituencies by holding meetings and enlisting public support for the Social Bills introduced in the Legislative Assembly—*e g*, Dr Deshmukh's Bill to amend the Hindu Law governing Hindu Women's Rights to Property, Mr B Das's Bill to amend the Sarda Act in order to make it more stringent, Dr. Bhagwan Das's Bill seeking recognition of inter-caste marriages, and Mr Hafiz Abdullah's Muslim Personal Law Application Bill—and to urge their adoption by the Assembly.

At the request of the International Alliance of Women for Suffrage and Equal Citizenship, a Memorandum on the Political, Legal, Social, and Educational Status of Women in India was submitted to the League of Nations and the Government of India.

### 12. *The Twelfth Conference.*

The Twelfth Session of the All-India Women's Conference was held at Nagpur in December, 1937, under the Presidentship of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur. Mrs Grace Lankester, Liaison officer in England was present.

The most notable feature of the year 1937 was the inclusion of about 60 women in the Legislatures of the various Provinces, which was possible on account of the facilities given to women to contest elections, held under the

Madame Amina El Said (Egypt), Dr Mary H 1 Vera Laughton Mathews (Director, WRNS, Engl (Australia), Mrs E. Bastoria and 3 others from Lebu

Among the resolutions adopted following may (1) Authorising the Standing Committee to dra setting out their rights as citizens of a free India, as embodying their concrete demand, (2) Extending and moral support to the demands of the Pan-Arabi for rescinding the Balfour Declaration providing a in Palestine against the wishes of the Arab People grave concern about the status and conditions of W. the appointment of a non-official commission of enquiry report on the policy functions living and service con of the organisation

Since the Seventeenth Session held in April 194 10,000 to 25 000 in 180 Constituent Branches, divided as During the period the Standing Committee met 3 times Surat. The quarterly Bulletin 'Roshni,' was published

The main features of the work undertaken during the

- (1) Submission of a Memorandum to and the tender the Hindu Law Committee by 3 members appointed Committee.
- (2) Establishment of a Central Office in Bombay where among other things, published seven tracts on the
- (3) Initiation of an All India Milk Campaign.
- (4) Agitation for re-imposing the ban on employment ground in mines. A censure motion on Government was successfully carried in the Indian Legislative Initiative of Mrs. Renuka Ray A I W O Representative
- (5) Collection of money for the Kasturba National 326, 200 and 238 famine orphans were taking permanent Homes in Bengal Orissa, and Malabar the A. I. Save the Children Committee.

The number of students in the Lady Irwin College 1 College received a grant of Rs. 10 000 from the Government the period.

Government of India Act 1935 One of these, namely the Hon'ble Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was elected to be a Cabinet Minister which shows gigantic strides made by the women's movements in the country A few of our women have been elected as Deputy Speakers of various Legislatures and some have been appointed Parliamentary Secretaries

The Standing Committee prepared a programme of legislation for improving the social status of women and the same was forwarded to the Prime Ministers of the new Provincial Governments and to the new women members of the Legislatures. Meetings were held regarding the legal disabilities of women and resolutions expressing public opinion in the matter were forwarded to proper quarters.

Mrs S C Mukerjee an Ex-Chairwoman of the Standing Committee was appointed by the Government of India as Indian delegate to the Conference of the Central Authorities of the League of Nations in Eastern Countries for combating traffic in women and children, held at Bandoeng Java, in February 1937

Mr Ekstrand, Director of Opium Traffic and Social Questions Section of the League of Nations visited India on his way back from Java and gave lectures under the auspices of the A I W C stressing the work to be done for children suffering from physical and mental congenital defects

There was increasing contact with other countries in the world and an invitation was received from British Guiana to attend the Centenary Celebration of the Indian Emigration

### 13 *The Thirteenth Conference*

The Thirteenth Session of the All India Women's Conference was held in Delhi in December 1938, under the Presidentship of Rani Lakshmi Bai Rajwade The Conference had distinguished visitors, Miss Mary A. Dingman, President of the Peace and Disarmament Committee of the International Women's Organisations, Miss P Hage of the International Labour Office, Geneva, Mrs Ali from Japan, Mrs Harlow from the United States of America, Miss G F Greig of Australia, and Miss Agatha Harrison.

The newest venture was the publication of an A I W C journal during the year 1938

### 14 *The Fourteenth Conference*

The Fourteenth Session of the Conference was held in Allahabad, in January 1940 under the Presidentship of Begum Hamid Ali. Owing to the international situation overseas members were not able to come. The A. I. W. C. continued its work in spite of the horror of totalitarian wars and the insecurity

of small states were too near. The procedure followed in the previous Conference held at Delhi was continued at Allahabad. The group discussions naturally reduced the time available for plenary sessions, but it was felt that free and frank discussions and exchange of experiences were more valuable and educative than platform oratory.

The creation of a new liaison officer for South Africa was another feature of this Session.

For the first time the General Secretary of the year was made responsible for the Bulletin of the Conference and with the help of the President and Patrons and other members of the Conference four issues of the Bulletin were published with two supplements, one on Education and the other on Health.

An Organising Secretary for the United Provinces was appointed during the year.

### 15 *The Fifteenth Conference*

The Fifteenth Session of the Conference was held at Bangalore in December, 1940, under the Presidentship of Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru. The decision to send a goodwill mission to China on behalf of the A.I.W.C. was postponed due to unavoidable reasons. A welcome feature of this Session was that some of our sisters from Ceylon were present and it is sincerely hoped that this precedent will be followed by our sisters from other neighbouring countries to foster better understanding amongst the Asiatic Nations.

The Branches of the Association carried on their various activities during the year. As a result of the agitation carried on by the Conference the Government of India was persuaded to appoint a Committee to examine the injustice done to women under the Hindu Law. The Conference raised its emphatic protest against the limitations imposed by the terms of reference to the Committee so appointed.

The Lady Irwin College continued to progress satisfactorily. The number of admissions was increased during the year and the increasing number of applications for admission to the College demonstrate its great utility and popularity.

Mrs Lakshmi N. Menon continued to render valuable service to the Conference as Editor of the *Roshni*, which became a valuable instrument for carrying on the propaganda of the Conference and for expressing the feelings of the womanhood of India.

### 16 *The Sixteenth Conference*

The Sixteenth Conference met at Coconada in December, 1941, under the Presidentship of Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. The Conference adopted two

concrete proposals the village Reconstruction Project and the Scheme of starting a Training Camp for Provincial Organisers and other women workers. Both these resolutions were implemented with considerable success.

All the Branches worked for the spread of literacy among adults. The notable success of the Bombay Branch in conducting thirty classes earned well merited recognition from the Bombay Government which sanctioned a grant for six months of Rs. 500 a month, the maximum it pays to any society.

The questionnaire of the Hindu Law Committee engaged the serious attention of all the Branches. The detailed replies of the Branches were consolidated and sent to the Rau Committee.

At the beginning of the Session, Shrimati Kamaladevi formally presented to the All India Women's Conference a beautiful Chinese scroll worked in silk—the picture of an Eagle perched on a pine tree before the rising sun. It is the gift of Madame Chiang Kai Shek and when Shrimati Kamaladevi was in Chungking she received it on behalf of the women of India. It will always be treasured as a symbol of the good fellowship between China and India.

#### 17 *The Seventeenth Conference.*

The Seventeenth Conference met in Bombay in April, 1944 under the Presidentship of Shrimati Kamaladevi. 205 delegates attended.

The amended Constitution came into force whereby all Constituent Branches had now an equal status. During a period of eight months while the President, Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Honorary General Secretary Mrs. Urmila Mehta, were in detention, Lady Rama Rau and Mrs. Kulsum Sayani acted as Chairwoman and General Secretary respectively.

The main features of the work undertaken during the period under review were—

1. Scheme for Training of Women for Social Service. 49 women received training in the Abrama Camp for 3 months.
2. Agitation in support of the Hindu Law Committee.
3. Relief work in connection with floods and famine in different parts of the country.

Mrs. Renuka Ray was nominated to the Central Legislative Assembly as a Representative of the All India Women's Conference during the pendency of the Intestate Succession and Marriage Bills. Propaganda on both these bills was carried on intensely by all the Branches of the A.I.W.O.

Funds were collected by all the Branches for relief in Midnapur after the devastating cyclone of October 1942. Delhi Branch contributed a sum of Rs. 13,000 for that purpose.

Lady Rama Rau helped to collect large sums of money for Bijapur famine relief operations. The Khar-Santa Cruz Constituent Branch (Bombay) helped actively by sending 3,500 garments and organising an embroidery and needle-work centre for the women of that district. In the light of experience of conditions in Bijapur, a revision of the Famine Code of Bombay was specially demanded by the Standing Committee at Khar, in May, 1943.

July, 1943, saw the culmination of the food crisis in Bengal which resulted in the terrible famine. The President, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and the Hon. General Secretary, Mrs. Kulsum Sayani toured the affected areas on two occasions. The Calcutta Branch issued an appeal to all the Branches for help and received Rs 60,000. Besides this, some of the Branches sent donations to other relief organisations which were already functioning in Bengal. The Calcutta Branch and the Branches in the districts were responsible for starting milk centres for infants and nursing mothers, gruel kitchens and medical relief.

The attention of the President was drawn to the helpless condition of thousands of destitute children in the famine areas and a scheme for starting children's homes was immediately undertaken. A central fund called the "Save the Children Fund" was started. This name was subsequently changed to "All-India Save the Children Committee," as an organisation called "Save the Children Fund" was already in existence in Geneva with Branches in London and New York. The first meeting of this Committee was held in February, 1944, in Calcutta, where Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Mrs. Urmila Mehta, and Shri Nalini Ranjan Sarkar were elected President, Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively.

In response to the President's appeal large sums of money were received both in India and from China, America, and Britain.

The Conference quarterly, *Roshni*, which was ably edited by Mrs. Lakshmi N. Menon, was taken over by Mrs. Idara Maydeo in March, 1943. In spite of difficulties in obtaining paper, etc., the *Roshni* appeared regularly.

The Lady Irwin College made steady progress under the able guidance of Mrs. Hannah Sen and the number of students increased.

Since the removal by Government of the ban on women working underground in mines, the Conference protested vigorously against the relaxation.

### 18 *The Eighteenth Conference*

The Eighteenth Session was held in Hyderabad (Sind) in December, 1945, under the Presidentship of Shrimati Hansa Mehta. 177 delegates attended the Session. The World War II had ended during the year 1945 and several prominent overseas visitors attended the Session for the first time in several years, viz., Miss Agatha Harrison (England), Dr. Hanna Rydh (Sweden).

Madame Amina El Said (Egypt), Dr Mary H. Rutnum (Ceylon) Dame Vera Laughton-Mathews (Director, W.R.N.S. England), Mrs. Jessie Street (Australia) Mrs E Bastoris and 3 others from Lebanon.

Among the resolutions adopted following may be specially mentioned (1) Authorising the Standing Committee to draft a Women's Charter setting out their rights as citizens of a free India, as well as a Memorandum embodying their concrete demand (2) Extending wholehearted sympathy and moral support to the demands of the Pan-Arabic Women's Association for rescinding the Balfour Declaration, providing a national home for Jews in Palestine against the wishes of the Arab People, and (3) Expressing grave concern about the status and conditions of W.A.O (I)'s and demanding the appointment of a non-official commission of enquiry to investigate and report on the policy functions, living and service conditions and the future of the organisation.

Since the Seventeenth Session, held in April 1944 membership rose from 10 000 to 25 000 in 180 Constituent Branches divided among 41 Branch Areas. During the period the Standing Committee met 3 times—in Bombay Delhi and Surat. The quarterly Bulletin "*Roshni*," was published regularly

The main features of the work undertaken during the period were —

- (1) Submission of a Memorandum to and the tendering of evidence before the Hindu Law Committee by 3 members appointed by the Standing Committee.
- (2) Establishment of a Central Office in Bombay with a paid staff which among other things, published seven tracts on topical subjects.
- (3) Initiation of an All India Milk Campaign.
- (4) Agitation for re-imposing the ban on employment of women underground in mines. A censure motion on Government for lifting this ban was successfully carried in the Indian Legislative Assembly at the initiative of Mrs. Renuka Ray A.I.W.O Representative there
- (5) Collection of money for the Kasturba National Memorial Fund  
326 200 and 238 famine orphans were taking-advantage of the 20 permanent Homes in Bengal Orissa, and Malabar respectively run by the A. I. Save the Children Committee.

The number of students in the Lady Irwin College increased to 200. The College received a grant of Rs. 10 000 from the Government of India during the period.



Full support was given to the agitation against misbehaviour of servants of the State on women, in the Kolhapur State and in the villages of Ashti and Chimur in C P., as also to one against the death sentences passed on Ashti and Chimur prisoners.

The Planning Adviser to the Government of India was given substantial co-operation by the Branches in his effort to get the data of the diet of nursing and pregnant mothers of India

Community Kitchens and Milk Centres as well as Industrial Centres were opened by an increased number of Branches, especially in famine-stricken Bengal

Fair-price grain shops, co-operative stores, etc., were added to the manifold activities of the Branches

Extensive tours were undertaken both by the President, Shrimati Kamaladevi and the Hon General Secretary, Mrs Kulsum Sayani, and personal contacts greatly stimulated work in Branches, inspite of many-sided difficulties with regard to food and other essential commodities created by the War, the tragedies of the Bengal famine, and the imprisonment of prominent personalities of the Executive of the A I W.C

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**Speech By**  
**HER HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS OF BERAR**

**At A Public Meeting**

**Held on 29th December 1946 at Akola**

*Lady Rama Rau Ladies and Gentlemen*

I am grateful for the kind invitation of the Reception Committee to preside over this Public Meeting of the Berar Session of the All India Women's Conference. Deeply appreciative of its aims objects and ideals I have been for long closely associated with the work of the Hyderabad Branch. Hyderabad has always taken an active interest in the All-India Women's movement and has given to the central organisation, two Vice-Presidents, two Founder Members Presidents and Patrons of whom one is Mrs Sarojini Naidu

The All India Women's Conference is notable for the variety of its activities which stretch across the wide range of nation building services like Health and Education champion the women's cause in the spheres of economic, social and political legislation and crystalize abstract ideals in actual service particularly of the poor the hungry and the down-trodden. The Lady Irwin Domestic Science College the Training Centres for social welfare workers; the spread of literacy among the masses and mobile vans run for their benefit the rescue homes for hundreds of young victims of the Bengal famine and the relief work among all communities after the recent tragedies in East Bengal and Bihar are but factional instances of the concrete achievements of the A.I.W.C. It has served as the training-ground for many who are to-day prominent in public life. It has received eminent representatives of foreign countries and sent its own Delegates to International meetings of women in different parts of the globe. We have cause to be proud of the several Ex Presidents of the Conference who have distinguished themselves in the service of India both at home and abroad. This year alone has witnessed, in the great assemblies of the United Nations Organisation the outstanding success of Mrs. Hansa Mehta who presented at San Francisco "The Indian Women's Charter of Rights" which aroused the admiration of the women of the other nations; Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur who went as a Delegate to the first Session of the United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organisation and returned

as one of its elected Vice-Presidents, Mrs Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, who is the only woman to have led a Delegation to the Central Assembly of U N O and who has won the universal acclamation for her victory in the South African issue of racial discrimination

I understand that, quite soon, Mrs Hamid Ali is to proceed to America as the chosen representative of the Indian women. I hope that the new year will bring opportunities to many more of our women, including myself, to form similar contacts abroad for the greater glory of our country in the international realm.

I am glad that, for the first words that I utter in public upon the soil of Berar, this opportunity should have been given me to say them now. Now, when India rises free to assume her great responsibilities and to act and to decide for herself, now, when she proudly prepares to take her rightful place among the free peoples and the great nations of the world. Today which is but a fleeting moment in the annals of the Earth, is yet an epoch of unparalleled importance and significance in the history of India.

Yet, at the same time, I am sad, because on to the golden threshold upon which she stands is cast a dark shadow and into her cup of joy is poured the corroding venom of communal strife, I feel it in my heart that it is not thus she should have approached this day, unsure of herself and with inner turmoil and torment tearing at her heart. It is with the calm strength and dignity born of peace and concord among her many-raced children and of understanding of one another's problems and purpose, with courage and conviction and tolerance that she should have moved to greet the dawn. Then none would have questioned or criticised her ability to attain or maintain that power. Of the many years that have gone to shape this day and of the first of sacrifice, shall nothing remain for the years to come, save the scorching, bitter, and burning embers of hate and the dead, dull ashes of distrust!

The unique feature of the All-India Women's Conference lies in its transcendence of all differences of rank, and race, of community, caste and creed. Subject to no political party or propaganda, it includes among its many members persons of various faiths and following. I dare hope and I dare express my hope that, at least through the efforts of this large and representative association, the women of India will be made to recognize and realise the urgent need for communal harmony. Without this, there can be neither progress nor security anywhere in the land, nor in our homes, whether they be mere mud huts or palatial houses with iron gates and guards! If those very women and mothers who have, knowingly or unknowingly helped to kill other women's children could but clearly see the importance of their real mission and the disaster that lies ahead, like a huge, sweeping tidal-wave, in case they should fail in their task! If only they could understand and instil that

understanding in their sons, that a big country like India, which in itself is almost a continent, is naturally the home of diverse cultures, races, and religions. But I do believe that those very same racial and cultural differences will contribute in synthesis to enrich the Indian Picture with their many elements, like the vividly opposing colours of a Titian or Tintoretto, immeasurably more than could the black-and-white drabness of monotonous uniformity of thought and outlook. But, in the creating of that great picture we must possess the art and understanding of the old masters to compose with the opposing, to harmonise and mingle without mixing or destroying.

Our task is one of gentle welding and of firm self-discipline for no work can be great or enduring which springs from an irresponsible and unheeding impulsiveness. So, let us blend our colours with wisdom and tolerance and compassion ere we sketch upon the national canvas. Let this be for us the women of India our vision, our desire and our determination !

